

## ARE YOU PREPARED?



## The Importance of Sleep

*“Sleep... without thee what is all the mornings wealth?” – Willaim Wordsworth*

Good night’s sleep is a foundation of health yet often eludes many. Poor sleep has been linked to many serious health problems including kidney and cardiovascular disease. It has also been connected to high blood pressure, obesity, strokes and depression.

When you sleep your brain eliminates the waste buildups, therefore, long-term poor sleep has been linked to cognitive decline and dementia. Some other consequences of poor sleep include daytime sleepiness, anxiety, diabetes, compromised immune system, worsened chronic lung illnesses and impaired mental performance.

### Best practices for a Good Night’s Rest

Establish a consistent sleep schedule; that includes the weekend!

Create an Optimal Sleep environment: a cool bedroom, eliminate as many light sources as possible and minimize noise. Consider sleeping with an eye mask, using a white noise machine, or earplugs to create a more restful environment.

Follow an evening wind down ritual - starting 30-60 minutes before bed – such as taking a warm bath, gently stretching, warm herbal tea, deep breathing/meditation and reading.

If you don’t fall asleep within 20 minutes get out of bed and do a quiet lowlight activity like reading until you feel sleepy- only, then get back into bed.

Reserve the bed for sleep – not working, eating, or scrolling through social media.

Watch daytime naps – if you must keep under 30 minutes and avoid after 3:00pm.

If possible, try to get some daytime sunlight, preferably soon after you are awake.

Avoid stimulants starting in the afternoon, limit alcohol intake and avoid eating a large meal for at least two hours before bed.

**From 9/11 to today, VOICES helps families and communities heal after tragedy.**

Voices Center for Resilience provides long-term support and resources that promote mental health care and wellness for victims’ families, responders, and survivors, and assists communities preparing for and recovering from traumatic events.

Voices Center for Resilience, formerly Voices of September 11<sup>th</sup>, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

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