Sleep Deprivation

Over 63 percent of Americans have reported that they are not getting the correct amount of sleep that they need during the week. Sleep deprivation is a societal epidemic that exists across all economic statuses, industries, and education. Sleep deprivation is an issue that we often ignore, but is frequently considered a root cause of decreased productivity, accidents, and mistakes that costs companies billions of dollars each year (according to Circadian reports).

As we start this new semester, take the time to plan so that you are not the hazard in your job or in your lab!

What is Healthy Sleep?

According to OSHA

- Make sure that you sleep 7-9 hours daily without disruptions.
- Try to sleep at the same time every day.
- Avoid drinks with caffeine prior to bedtime.
- If working evening or nights, make sure that the durations is less than 45 minutes or greater than 2 hours to allow for a complete sleep/wake cycle.
- Make sure that the sleeping environment is comfortable, cool, dark, and quiet.
- Exercise regularly. Eat a balanced diet. Maintain a healthy weight.
- If you have difficulty sleeping, keep a sleep diary and talk to your doctor
1. **Decreased Communication** - studies show that sleep deprived individuals drop the intensity of their voices; pause for long intervals without reason, enunciate poorly, mumble instructions.

2. **Performance Deteriorates** - performance declines frequently and individuals experience slower response times, which can definitely be a problem when dealing with hazardous items.

3. **Increase Risk of Distraction** - individual often have a harder time staying focused, developing and updating strategies.

4. **Driving Impairments** - 22 hours of sleep deprivations results in neurobehavioral performance that is comparable to a 0.08 percent blood alcohol level (legally drunk in the U.S.)

5. **Increase Number of Errors** - both commission (i.e. performing an act that leads to harm) and omission (not performing an expected task)

6. **Poor Cognitive Assimilation and Memory** - short-term memory deteriorates, as well as does the ability to remember temporal sequence of events.

7. **Poor Mood Appropriate Behavior** - inappropriate mood behaviors including outburst such as irritability, impatience, childish humor, etc.

8. **Greater Risk** - Taking Behavior - sleep deprivation causes the areas that control rationale and logical thinking to less active, resulting in more risk takers.

9. **Inability to Make Necessary Adjustments** - the ability to think and be flexible are effected. This may greatly affect innovation on many things.

10. **Effects of Sleep Deprivation Compound Across Nights** - four or more nights of partial sleep deprivation (less than 7 hours) could be equivalent to a total night of sleep deprivation. Sleep deprivation can affect us for up to two weeks.

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"My dad used to say ‘You snooze, you lose.’ I think that’s when my insomnia started."