

Worn Out Woman: Small Steps for Physical Health: Sleep and Rest

This week, our small step to physical health challenge is to work at getting plenty of rest and sleep. God's Girls watched another 10 minute segment of the Wellness Seminar produced by Bethel Church. (You can subscribe by going to <http://www.ibethel.tv/media/past/conference>)

Psalm 127:2 The Message Bible

Its useless to rise early and go to bed late, and work your worried fingers to the bone. Don't you know he enjoys giving rest to those he loves?

Matthew 11:28,29 KJV

28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

Sleep rejuvenates us and that is the time that growth takes place in children. Our bodies repair and rebuild during sleep. Important hormones are released that regulate our appetites, weight control, and growth. Sleep slows the aging process and boosts the immune system. Trillions of cells are replaced while you sleep. If you will get 7-9 hours of sleep a night, your body will produce what is known as Natural Killer Cells that fight off infection and other invaders. Your brain will function better. It will reduce stress related cortisol levels in your body.

There are many reasons we cannot get a good night sleep. Caffeine, drugs, food, exercise, bad pillows or mattresses, hot flashes, enlarged prostate, snoring spouse and other loud noises, and newborn babies all affect the quantity and quality of the rest we get at night. There are some things we have no control over that influence the quality of our sleep. But those things that we can control, should not keep us from getting adequate rest. Do you drink caffeine? Caffeine stays in your body for 20 hours. Consider eliminating all caffeine from your diet. But if you do not, then consider having no caffeine after NOON. Nicotine and alcohol also disrupt sleep. If you are taking lots of medications, they too can impoverish your sleep. Eating too much sugar and processed foods can cause *food insomnia*. If your blood sugar crashes during the night because you consumed too much sugar the night before, it will wake you up suddenly. Try not to eat anything after 8 PM. When you do eat, make sure it is as natural and whole as God made it as possible, within balance. Eating a little protein before bed is helpful if you are prone to food insomnia. Exercising right before bedtime affects sleep, too. Do not exercise within 3 hours of bedtime, and preferably exercise 5 hours beforehand, if you want to be sure to get a good night's rest. If you will bathe your eyes and face in sunlight for 20 minutes in the bright early morning sunshine, it will help to release melatonin for a good nights sleep as well as form natural vitamin D on your skin.

The best time for sleep is 10 pm. If you have a chronic disease, the best time for sleep is 9 PM. Turn down the lights. Do not watch TV in your bedroom. Do not work in your bedroom. A

massage can help you relax to get to sleep. There are helpful herbs that help relax the body and ready it for bed: valerian, 5HTP and others. Consult a natural health care provider for information. From 10 PM-2AM, is the best body repairing sleep. From 2-6AM it's the best psyche repair or defrag time.

Small steps are necessary to make lasting strides toward change. This week, our small step, physical health challenge to add to last week's *drink more water challenge*, is to:

Work at getting plenty of rest and sleep.

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