

# Sleep Quiz



1. How many Americans are chronically sleep-deprived?
  - a. 80%
  - b. 71%
  - c. 55%
  - d. 42%
2. What is the percentage of US children who suffer from sleep problems?
  - a. 27%
  - b. 25%
  - c. 17%
  - d. 11%
3. Which diseases are related to sleep loss?
  - a. Diabetes
  - b. Obesity
  - c. Heart
  - d. All of the above.
4. What percentage of Americans are losing sleep at least one night a week?
  - a. 45%
  - b. 32%
  - c. 23%
  - d. 19%
5. How many traffic accidents are caused by drivers falling asleep at the wheel?
  - a. 100,000
  - b. 80,000
  - c. 56,000
  - d. 43,000

Answers: 1) a. 80%, 2) a. 27%, 3) d. All of the above., 4) b. 32%, 5) b. 80,000

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# Health Unlimited



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## Your Kids and Sleep!

By Fred G. Hardinge, DrPH, RD, CHES, FADA

Today we live in a society that does not value the importance of rest and sleep. To many, sleep is considered to be a waste of time, and an option at best. This attitude has infected all age groups in society!

Depriving ourselves of sleep is much like depriving ourselves of food. If we eat fewer calories than we need each day, we will slowly lose weight because the effects are cumulative. When we deprive ourselves of sleep, we accumulate the total amount of sleep loss over time in the same way. If you lose 1 hour of sleep each night over a week, at the end of the week you will have a sleep debt of 7 hours which is nearly the same as losing a whole night's sleep.

What is surprising to many people is that a sleep debt of 3-8 hours will produce noticeable effects on physical and mental performance! Research on French cyclists who had lost only 3 hours of sleep showed they fatigued faster than when rested! Evidence continues to accumulate that relatively small amounts of sleep loss weakens the immune system and makes us more likely to succumb to infections and disease.

### Kids are at High Risk

An epidemic of sleeplessness is taking a heavy toll on the children of our country — and their ability to learn and cope with the challenges of life. A recent survey by the National Sleep Foundation indicates that a majority of kids report that they are sleepy during the day, and 15 percent admit to falling asleep in school classes! This problem hits teenagers especially hard, but its roots begin earlier in life.

Twenty to thirty years ago most teens were alert and energetic all day long, but now they are



falling asleep in school. Sleep deprivation is not limited to overworked and overstressed parents. Why? Certainly its clear that the lure of the Internet, TV, increasing social obligations, more after school jobs and academic pressures all contribute to this growing problem.

The ability to learn new information and emotional instability are clear casualties of sleep deprivation. A number of studies demonstrate that lack of sleep severely curbs the ability to comprehend and retain information and creativity in both adults and young people. A study in college students has shown that getting two hours of quality sleep before midnight maximizes the ability to retain newly learned information.

Some experts suggest that many children diagnosed with attention deficit disorder are really suffering from sleep deprivation. Parents have long recognized that when their otherwise healthy children are short of sleep their attention span shortens, they become much more emotionally instable, and they may become hyperactive, too!

## It Impacts Our Spiritual Life Also

As Christian parents, we not only desire academic excellence in our children, but also character development and spiritual excellence. While difficult to study, it is important to be aware of the impact of sleep deprivation on these vital areas of growth! Consider this counsel:

“Anything that lessens physical strength enfeebles the mind and makes it less capable of discriminating between right and wrong. We become less capable of choosing the good and have less strength of will to do that which we know to be right.” COL 3:46

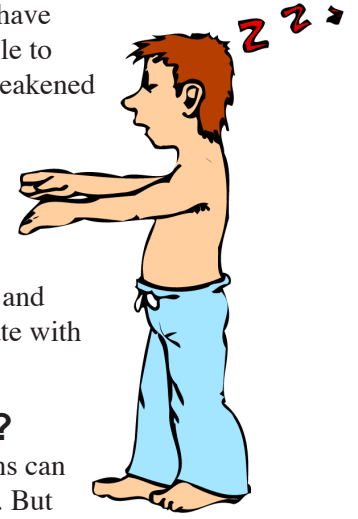
Being tired certainly has a more important impact on our spiritual lives than it has on our ordinary daily activities! Optimal decision-making capacity is necessary to differentiate between right and wrong. Yet when we are tired we have even less motivation and will-power to act on what we know is correct. Thus we fall into temptation more easily. Remember,



for centuries sleep deprivation has been a most effective ingredient of brain-washing, and is even purposefully used today by professional labor and hostage negotiators.

When humans of all ages are tired they have less self-control and become more susceptible to temptations. Even the desire to do right is weakened by fatigue.

Bible study and prayer is the lifeline of the Christian. The Devil knows that if he can keep us tired even in the good activities of life it will lessen our ability and interest in the study and understanding of the Bible, and will weaken our commitment to communicate with God in prayer.



## How much sleep do we need?

Most sleep researchers agree that humans can “get by” on about 7 hours of sleep per night. But how many of us want to just get by in life? The evidence is strong that for peak performance in all areas of our lives, we need between 8-9 hours of sleep each night. Our teen students need a little more to maximize their learning and memory abilities. Obviously, getting those amounts of sleep will require careful choices and self-discipline.

## Remember...

There are significant rewards for choosing to get enough rest: A rested child will accomplish more in less time and do it better, more efficiently and cheerfully! Mom’s and Dad’s will too!

Dr. Hardinge’s background includes pastoring, academic teaching, community health education, corporate training and consultation, administration and private health counseling. Currently, Dr. Hardinge is the Director of Internet Ministries for It is Written.

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