



## Sleep is Important Every Day

Do you wake up so refreshed that you burst out in song? Are you the person filled with energy that livens up the workplace when you report to work? Are you fit for duty because you got about eight hours of sleep?

Most North Americans, whether they work in the daytime or on shifts, are sleep deprived. We choose to do other things besides sleep or we have problems staying asleep when we try.

What happens if we don't meet our sleep needs? We accumulate a sleep debt that we will have to "pay off." This might involve extra sleep by napping, going to bed early, or sleeping in to catch up. If we sleep less than we need to feel refreshed and don't catch up we might experience:

- Daytime sleepiness or sleepiness on night shift
- Cumulative fatigue
- Difficulty concentrating
- Inattentiveness
- Poor thinking
- Increased risk of accidents
- Health complications

What can you do to get enough sleep? Discuss your ideas with your co-workers, family, doctor, or health professionals.

### The Epworth Sleepiness Scale

To assess how sleepy you are during the daytime, answer the questions below. Even if you haven't been in some of these situations, think about how they might affect you.

Choose from the following answers:

- 0 = would never doze
- 1 = slight chance of dozing
- 2 = moderate chance of dozing
- 3 = high chance of dozing

If you can't relate to the word "doze," think about how likely it is that your eyelids would droop, you'd feel yourself "nodding off" or you'd actually fall asleep during the eight activities listed below:

1. Sitting and reading
2. Watching television or a show on a computer
3. Sitting quietly in public
4. As a passenger in moving car, for over an hour
5. Lying down in the middle of the afternoon
6. Sitting and talking to someone
7. Sitting quietly after a lunch without alcohol
8. As a driver of a car, while stopped in traffic for a few minutes

A total score of 6 to 9 suggests daytime sleepiness.

A total score of 10 to 15 suggests excessive daytime sleepiness.

A total score of 16 or more suggests dangerously excessive daytime sleepiness.

**Avoid driving or performing hazardous tasks; consult with a sleep specialist as soon as possible.**

***The loss of one night's sleep causes ten days of discomfort.***

~ Chinese proverb