



REST

◆ CONCERNING YOUR HEALTH ◆

REST—RELAXATION AND SLEEP

Life today is fast paced, exciting—and exhausting. Is more sleep the answer? Not always! A refreshing, uninterrupted night's sleep is a definite advantage, but the issues are considerably more complicated. Most people work at sedentary jobs, with deadline pressures and emotionally draining problems. These people often find it difficult to fall asleep or rest peacefully.

Sleep is very essential to maintain a well-balanced mind and healthy body. During sleep your blood pressure goes down, your pulse rate decreases, your breathing slows, your temperature lowers slightly. If you deprive your body of adequate sleep, great demands are made on your back-up energy resources. If you do this habitually, you can expect to live your life "on the edge," with little resistance to disease and stress.

Muscles require periodic relaxation to "let go," rest, and recuperate. If your muscles are not relaxed when you stop to rest, it will be more difficult to regain your working fitness due to this unnecessary tension.

Rest comes after relaxation. Rest is defined as inactivity of any particular function of the body. The ability to relax and rest depends on the degree that one can "let go" of their worries, troubles and cares. Sleep follows relaxation and rest.

How much sleep is enough? The amount depends on the individual. Usually 7-8 hours of sleep a night is adequate, for some less and for some more may be necessary. Some people actually function better with a short nap mid-day.

SLEEP AIDS

What should you do if you can't sleep? What about sleeping medications or alcohol? Sleep medications may be helpful in emergencies, but they will contribute to chronic fatigue if continued over time. They are also addictive. Alcohol induced



sleep is not as restorative as normal sleep. Besides, who wants to wake up with a hangover?

The best sleep inducers are natural means. Mental and emotional fatigue are best counteracted by physical activity. Walk, swim, run or work in the garden before trying to sleep after a mentally tiring day. Try taking a warm bath, listen to soft music, drink a warm drink that does not contain any caffeine. Maintain a regular schedule for going to bed and getting up. Eat your evening meal several hours before bedtime and make it the lightest meal of the day.

There are some simple exercises which may also help you to relax. Stretching, rolling your neck in slow large circles, smile and hold it, frown and hold it. Raise your eyebrows and hold it. Take some deep breaths and relax.

The ultimate rest is found in Jesus. When we leave our burdens with the Lord, we are free from guilt. We have a peace that cannot be achieved in any other way.

The Lord has encouraged us to work six days and rest the seventh. That is His plan for the proper balance between work and rest. Count your blessings. Fill your mind with gratitude and thanksgiving.

