

## **SLEEP FACTS**

-The record for the longest period without sleep is 18 days, 21 hours, 40 minutes during a rocking chair marathon. The record holder reported hallucinations, paranoia, blurred vision, slurred speech and memory and concentration lapses.

**- Anything less than five minutes to fall asleep at night means you're sleep deprived. The ideal is between 10 and 15 minutes, meaning you're still tired enough to sleep deeply, but not so exhausted you feel sleepy by day.**

- One of the best predictors of insomnia later in life is the development of bad habits from having sleep disturbed by young children.

**- Seventeen hours of sustained wakefulness leads to a decrease in performance equivalent to a blood alcohol-level of 0.05%.**

- The 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill off Alaska, the Challenger space shuttle disaster and the Chernobyl nuclear accident have all been attributed to human errors in which sleep-deprivation played a role.

**- In insomnia following bereavement, sleeping pills can disrupt grieving.**

- Tiny luminous rays from a digital alarm clock can be enough to disrupt the sleep cycle even if you do not fully wake. The light turns off a "neural switch" in the brain, causing levels of a key sleep chemical to decline within minutes.

**- To drop off we must cool off; body temperature and the brain's sleep-wake cycle are closely linked. That's why hot summer nights can cause a restless sleep. The blood flow mechanism that transfers core body heat to the skin works best between 18 and 30 degrees.**

- After five nights of partial sleep deprivation, three drinks will have the same effect on your body as six would when you've slept enough.

**- The NRMA estimates fatigue is involved in 1 in 6 fatal road accidents.**

- Teenagers need as much sleep as small children (about 10 hrs) while those over 65 need the least of all (about 6 hours). For the average adult aged 25-55, eight hours is considered optimal.

**- Some studies suggest women need up to an hour's extra sleep a night compared to men, and not getting it may be one reason women are much more susceptible to depression than men.**

- Feeling tired can feel normal after a short time. Those deliberately deprived of sleep for research initially noticed greatly the effects on their alertness, mood and physical performance, but the awareness dropped off after the first few days.

**- As a group, 18 to 24 year-olds deprived of sleep suffer more from impaired performance than older adults.**

**- Experts say one of the most alluring sleep distractions is the 24-hour accessibility of the internet.**

**More facts** <http://www.abc.net.au/science/sleep/facts.htm>

<http://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicDetails.aspx?p=243&np=292&id=2664>