

Transcript Season 2: Episode 6 – Getting Enough Sleep

(Alarm ringing.) How many of you wake up before the alarm goes off in the morning? Did you know that if you are getting enough sleep, you will wake up a few minutes before the alarm rings?

Podcast Opener:

Everyone needs some advice now and then. If you are getting ready to leave home or have been on your own for a while, Grown Up U: Facts for Success can give you trusted advice that can take the stress out of adulthood. Listen and find some answers to the questions being constantly bombarded at you.

Podcast Script:

Mary Ann Kizer: Hello, I'm Mary Ann Kizer, Jefferson County Extension Family and Consumer Sciences Agent with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture. Today my guest is

Dot Hart: Dot Hart, Extension Wellness Ambassador and Arkansas Extension Homemakers Delta District Director.

Mary Ann Kizer: Dot, did you know that sleep is as important as diet and exercise for all ages? The old saying, "I woke up on the wrong side of the bed", is true if you didn't get enough sleep.

According to Nebraska Extension, not sleeping enough on a regular basis and not getting good sleep every night is related to several physical, social, cognitive, and behavioral problems such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, Alzheimer's, increased sickness, accidents, and anger. Lack of sleep may cause shorter attention span, reduced learning and memory, poorer test performance, and increased depression or anxiety.

Dot Hart: Wow! Hearing all the effects of lack of sleep, it's important to know tips and tricks for better sleep. Extension Services from Nebraska, Mississippi, and Perdue offer research-based better sleep programs. Here are some proven sleep tips:

Keep your sleep schedule at the same time every day, even on weekends. Adults of every age, 18 and up, need at least 7 hours of sleep per night. Create mental triggers before bedtime, such as a warm bath, eating a light snack, or creating a To-Do List for the next day.

Mary Ann Kizer: And it's hard to get up sometimes on the weekends but you really need to keep that sleep schedule.

Some foods may help you rest. During the day, eat real food and drink lots of water but quit a few hours before bedtime. Good night-time snack ideas are toast with peanut butter, cereal with milk, or crackers with cheese.

Other foods make it hard to get good rest. Avoid foods with caffeine because it takes a few hours to get out of your system. Limit coffee, soft drinks, and chocolate to the mornings. Avoid alcohol because it tends to wake you up in the middle of the night and contributes to snoring.

Dot Hart: Try wearing non-restrictive clothing. I love 100% cotton pajamas because the natural fiber keeps the skin cooler. Eliminate anything in the bed that would tangle against you when turning over, pushes against your bladder, or creates too much heat.

Mary Ann Kizer: And always set nighttime temperature at 60-67 degrees. Bodies must cool down for good sleep. On the other hand, *or foot*, cold feet can interfere with your ability to fall asleep. Wear socks and if that doesn't warm your feet, place a hot water bottle or heating pad at your feet under the covers. You could also soak your feet in warm water before getting in bed.

Dot Hart: Sleep position is important. The spine should be aligned, arms and legs not bent much, no leg-stacking. Sleeping on your back is best unless you have sleep apnea. Second best is sleeping on your left side for digestion and waste elimination. The right side is third best. Sleeping on your front is worst. It kinks the neck and flattens the spine leading to back pain and restricts your airway and breathing. Change your pillow or mattress plushness to suit yourself but don't use a hard pillow.

Mary Ann Kizer: Once in bed, if you don't fall asleep immediately, do a body inventory. Focus on one body part at a time, from head to toe, and relax each part. You can also use a weighted blanket to relieve anxiety and to relax the nervous system.

Dot Hart: And if you work the night shift, magnesium supplements may be a helpful option but check with your doctor before use. Never become dependent on sleeping pills.

Mary Ann Kizer: Go around your house and start dimming lights indoors a few hours before bedtime. Cut off the TV and computer at least an hour before bedtime. Silence devices so there is no dinging, vibrating, or lighting up happening while you sleep. Alarms will still work in airplane mode.

Dot Hart: Lose weight. Yes, lose weight that causes difficulty breathing to relieve stress on internal organs. Many times, 5 to 10 pound makes a significant difference. Add more activity to your day. If you have a "desk job", get up and move every hour.

Mary Ann Kizer: Use a humidifier next to the bed during winter months. Dry winter air can cause sinus issues.

Dot Hart: Use a non-lighted noise machine or download a white noise app on your phone.

Mary Ann Kizer: Try pleasant scents like lavender in your bedroom. It is proven to promote relaxation.

Dot Hart: In the winter, preheat your bed with an electric blanket or electric mattress pad but turn it off when you get into bed.

Mary Ann Kizer: Go to bed each night with a sense of gratitude for sleep, not dreading it. Make sure your bedroom is a sanctuary of quiet, clean, uncluttered, cool darkness that you appreciate.

Dot Hart: Use your alarm clock the right way, no snooze button! You waste time every time you hit snooze.

Mary Ann Kizer: There are 70 million Americans suffer from sleep disorders that affect one's overall sleep patterns.

- Insomnia is difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep.
- Sleep Apnea is also called "sleep-disordered breathing". It is characterized by gasps or "snorting" noises.
- Restless Leg Syndrome causes a prickling, tingling, or "creeping" sensation in a person's legs.
- Narcolepsy is sometimes described as "sleep attacks". Symptoms include daytime sleepiness, muscle weakness, sleep paralysis, and vivid dreams.

Sleep disorders can impact a person's overall health, safety, and quality of life. Contact your doctor if you think you have a sleep disorder.

Dot Hart: Remember EEEEEasy tips to get more ZZZs. Everyday go to bed at the same time. Electronics – Avoid an hour before bedtime.

Mary Ann Kizer: Environment – Sleep time bedroom temperature of 60 to 67 degrees. Eating Healthy – limit caffeine to mornings. Exercise – Be active every day.

For more information, refer to our research-based sources.

This is Mary Ann Kizer and Dot Hart with the University of Arkansas System in Jefferson County. (*Alarm ringing.*) Until next time, Get Better Sleep!

Podcast Closer:

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