

... AUGUST 2008 ...

QUICK TAKES



Most people are aware of the hazards of drunk driving. But did you know that driving while drowsy can be just as deadly? If you are short on sleep, stay out of the driver's seat!

Here are some tips to avoid drowsy driving:

- Be well rested before hitting the road
- Avoid driving between midnight and 7 a.m.
- Don't drive alone
- Schedule frequent breaks on long road trips
- Don't drink alcohol!
- Don't count on caffeine.

Could You Have a Sleep Disorder?

Sleep needs vary from person to person, and they change throughout the lifecycle. Most adults need seven to eight hours of sleep each night. If you are spending enough time in bed and still wake up tired or feel sleepy during the day, you may have a sleep disorder.

Sleep disorders involve any difficulties related to sleeping, including difficulty falling or staying asleep, falling asleep at inappropriate times, excessive total sleep time, or abnormal behaviors associated with sleep. More than 100 different disorders of sleeping and waking have been identified. They can be grouped into four main categories: problems with falling and staying asleep; problems with staying awake; problems with adhering to a regular sleep schedule; and sleep-disruptive behaviors. The most common sleep disorders are insomnia, sleep apnea, and restless legs syndrome.

These disorders and the resulting sleep deprivation interfere with work, driving, and social activities. They also account for an estimated \$16 billion in medical costs each year, while the indirect costs due to lost productivity and other factors are probably much greater.

Although sleep disorders can significantly affect your health, safety, and well-being, they can be treated. Talk to your doctor if you have any of these signs of a sleep disorder:

- You consistently take more than 30 minutes each night to fall asleep.
- You routinely fall asleep within five minutes of lying down.
- You consistently awaken several times each night and then have trouble falling back to sleep, or you awaken too early in the morning.
- You often feel sleepy during the day, you take frequent naps, or you fall asleep at inappropriate times during the day.
- Your bed partner says that when you sleep, you snore loudly, snort, gasp, make choking sounds, or stop breathing for short periods.
- You have creeping, tingling, or crawling feelings in your legs or arms that are relieved by moving or massaging them, especially at night when trying to fall asleep.
- Your bed partner notices that your legs or arms jerk often during sleep.
- You have vivid, dreamlike experiences while falling asleep or dozing.
- You have episodes of sudden muscle weakness when you are angry or fearful, or when you laugh.
- You feel as though you cannot move when you first wake up.

Maintaining regular sleep habits and a quiet sleep environment may prevent some sleep disorders. However, if lack of sleep or excessive sleepiness is interfering with daily living, make an appointment with your health care provider.

Sleep research is expanding and attracting more and more attention from scientists. Researchers now know that sleep is an active and dynamic state that greatly influences our waking hours, and they realize that we must understand sleep to fully understand the brain. Innovative techniques, such as brain imaging, can now help researchers understand how different brain regions function during sleep and how different activities and disorders affect sleep. Understanding the factors that affect sleep in health and disease also may lead to revolutionary new therapies for sleep disorders and to ways of overcoming jet lag and the problems associated with shift work.

Problem Sleepiness

What is problem sleepiness? Everyone feels sleepy at times. However, when sleepiness interferes with your daily routine, or reduces the ability to function, it is called "problem sleepiness." A person can be sleepy without realizing it. For example, a person may not feel sleepy while working, but the same person can fall asleep while driving home after work. You may have problem sleepiness if you:

- consistently do not get enough sleep, or get poor quality sleep;
- fall asleep while driving;
- struggle to stay awake when inactive, such as when watching TV or reading;
- have difficulty paying attention or concentrating at work;
- have performance problems at work;
- are often told by others that you appear sleepy;
- have difficulty remembering;
- have slowed responses;
- have difficulty controlling your emotions; or
- must take naps on most days.



enough sleep, even on one night, a "sleep debt" begins to build and increases until enough sleep is obtained. Problem sleepiness occurs as the debt accumulates. Many people do not get enough sleep during the work week and then sleep longer on the weekends or days off to reduce their sleep debt. If too much sleep has been lost, sleeping in on the weekend may not

completely reverse the effects of not getting enough sleep during the week.

Medications and Drugs

In general, medications do not help problem sleepiness, and some make it worse. Caffeine can reduce sleepiness and increase alertness, but only temporarily. Alcohol may shorten the time it takes to fall asleep,

but it disrupts sleep later in the night adding to the problem sleepiness.

Medications may be prescribed in certain situations.

However, long-term use of sleep medication is recommended only for the treatment of specific sleep disorders.

If you think you are getting enough sleep, but still feel sleepy during the day, check with your doctor to be sure your sleepiness is not due to a sleep disorder.

To get more information on sleep and sleep disorders, contact the National Center on Sleep Disorders Research (NCSDR) of the National Institutes of Health at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/about/ncsdr/index.htm>.

Corn Pudding

Ingredients

No-stick cooking spray
4 ears fresh sweet corn, shucked
1 1/2 cups low-fat milk
1 whole egg
1 egg white
2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
1 tablespoon cornstarch
Salt to taste
Freshly ground black pepper to taste
3 slices lean, reduced-sodium bacon, preferably turkey bacon, cooked and crumbled
1/2 cup crushed corn flakes

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Spray a 1-quart baking dish with cooking spray
2. Cut the kernels from the corn cobs with a serrated knife.
3. Combine milk, egg, egg white, maple syrup, cornstarch, salt, pepper and half the corn kernels in a food processor or blender.
4. Spread the remaining corn kernels and the crumbled bacon in the prepared baking dish. Pour the pureed corn mixture on top. Bake for 30 minutes. Sprinkle with corn flakes and bake until golden, about 15 minutes longer.

Makes: 6 Servings | Takes 1 Hour

(Photo Source: ©Ellen Silverman/Matria Healthcare)



Nutrition Facts: Per Serving – 157 Calories, 5.3g Fat, 1.8g Saturated fat, 0g Trans Fat, 9g Protein, 22g Carbohydrate, 1.5g Fiber, 304mg Sodium