



A publication of the Brown Medicine
Geriatrics Department 401-649-4010

Sleep

Did you know?

Brown Medicine-Geriatrics offers after-hour access to on-call physicians, same day sick visits and weekend appointments for urgent issues.

Please call the office for more information and/or to schedule an appointment.

Weekend Urgent Care Visits for Primary Care Patients

Avoid going to the Hospital Emergency Room or another Urgent Care Facility.

Hours:

Saturday: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Sunday: 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Brown Physicians Patient Center
375 Wampanoag Trail
East Providence, RI 02915

Call Geriatrics Primary Care to schedule an appointment: 401-649-4010

2 ways to get the Geriatrics Newsletter:

1. Available at our Geriatrics office in East Providence

2. Online at:
Brownmed.org/division-of-geriatrics-and-palliative-medicine

Look at my watch, you are getting sleepy..... or maybe not. Let's try to shed some light on the subject of darkness and put you to sleep with this story.

How much sleep is normal?

Older adults need the same amount of sleep as everyone else and what they needed throughout their life. We all are a little different. Unfortunately, as we age, we are more likely to get sleep in pieces, than to have a restful night. Going to bed and getting up earlier over time is normal and can make you feel superior and virtuous.

Why is getting sleep a problem so often?

Pain, having to get up to use the bathroom, heartburn, hot flashes and heart or lung conditions are medical reasons for sleep problems. Not having a routine, napping during the day, getting no sunlight, lack of physical activity during the day, caffeine too late in the day, or nicotine all harm sleep. Alcohol may make you drowsy, but it causes people to wake up in the middle of the night. A noisy room, too hot, too cold, too light, a noisy or restless bed partner (yes, we can do without our spouses, but those lovable pets can trash the night) can be a factor. Stress. Leg cramps. And worst of all – staring at the clock is a vicious cycle.



So, what pill do I take?

No pill. Well, melatonin may be OK at 1-3mg. But the anti-anxiety pills (e.g., lorazepam, alprazolam), sleeping pills (e.g., zolpidem, zaleplon, eszopiclone) and over the counter pills (diphenhydramine) do not work well enough to risk the side effects, even if trying to get off of them is hard. They can even cause sleep apnea and make your sleep worse. Make sure stopping these drugs is done under medical supervision as withdrawal must be done properly.

So, what good is a doctor anyway?

If you are always drowsy during the day, you could have a condition like sleep apnea where breathing stops (central sleep apnea) or the air passage closes (obstructive sleep apnea). The person may not be aware of the abnormality, though a bed partner may. A partner may also notice a condition of jumpy legs called periodic leg movement disorder. Sleep testing may be appropriate. You may notice your legs just feel restless, tingly or tight at night. That is restless legs syndrome and may be a sign of low iron. Other medical conditions may be better treated to improve sleep. Some medicines can hurt sleep as a side effect and there may be substitutes. Brief cognitive behavioral therapy (teaching you to control your thoughts) of just a couple of sessions or online can be a big help.

And what do I do?

Have a regular schedule, 7 days a week. Do not nap. Get some good daytime light. Exercise, but not within 3 hours of bedtime. Caution with alcohol and caffeine intake. Do not eat late. Make the bedroom comfortable for sleep and do not watch TV, use the computer or smart phone. Relax before trying to fall asleep with music, a book or a comfy shower or bath. If you wake up, do not look at the clock. If you cannot fall asleep after 20 minutes, do not stay in bed and stress over it. Get out of bed and do a relaxing or downright boring activity. Like reading this. Nighty night.

Sources: National Institute on Aging: nia.nih.gov; Health in Aging Foundation: healthinaging.org/health-aging-foundation
Author: Peter Hollmann, MD, Brown Medicine Chief Medical Officer and Board Member of the American Geriatrics Society.

Are you taking too many medications? Worried about side effects?

Brown Medicine's Division of Geriatrics and Palliative Medicine has a multidisciplinary team of physicians, nurse practitioners, nurses, social workers, and pharmacists who can review your medications and the reasons for taking them. As an established patient we can help you identify those that can potentially be decreased in dosage, be changed to a safer alternative, or discontinued altogether.



Contact a geriatrician at Brown Medicine today for a holistic, comprehensive medication assessment by calling 401.649.4010.

Help save a life.

FREE CPR Training

When

**9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. or
1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**

- August 10 & 24
- September 7 & 21

Where

Brown Medicine Patient Center
375 Wampanoag Trail
East Providence, RI

Who Should Attend?

- Caregivers
- Bus Drivers
- School Teachers
- Fitness Center Personnel
- Coaches
- Child Care Workers
- Camp Counselors
- Restaurant Workers
- Boy Scout/ Girl Scout Leaders
- And more*

*Training is geared for the lay person and not for medical or law enforcement personnel.

Register:

Med.CPR@BrownPhysicians.org

Open to anyone over the age of 18. Advance registration required. Class size is limited.



BROWN MEDICINE
BROWN PHYSICIANS, INC.

September is Healthy Aging Month: 6 Tips for Reinventing Yourself.

1. **Do not act your age** or at least what you think your current age should act like. What was your best year so far? 28? 40? Now? Picture yourself at that age and be it. Some people may say this is denial, but we say it's positive thinking and goes a long way toward feeling better about yourself. (Tip: Don't keep looking in the mirror, just FEEL IT!)
2. **Be positive in your conversations** and your actions every day. When you catch yourself complaining, check yourself right there and change the conversation to something positive. (Tip: Stop watching the police reports on the local news.)
3. **Ditch the downer friends.** Have negative friends who complain all of the time and constantly talk about how awful everything is? Drop them. As cruel as that may sound, distance yourself from people who do not have a positive outlook on life. They will only depress you and stop you from moving forward. Surround yourself with energetic, happy, positive people of all ages and you will be happier too. (Tip: Smile often. It's contagious and wards off naysayers.)
4. **Stand up straight!** You can knock off the appearance of a few extra years with this trick your mother kept trying to tell you. Look at yourself in the mirror. Are you holding your stomach in, have your shoulders back, chin up? Check out how much better your neck looks! Fix your stance and practice it every day, all day until it is natural. You will look great and feel better. (Tip: Your waistline will look trimmer if you follow this advice.)
5. **Get a physical.** Make this month the time to set up your annual physical and other health screenings. Go to the appointments and then, hopefully, you can stop worrying about ailments for a while.
6. **Find your inner artist.** Who says taking music lessons is for young school children? You may have an artist lurking inside you just waiting to be tapped. Have you always wanted to play the piano, violin or tuba? Have you ever wondered if you could paint a portrait or scenic in oil? What about working with wood?

Source: <https://healthyaging.net/healthy-lifestyle/september-is-healthy-aging-month-10-tips-to-celebrate/>



Take Control of Your Heart Failure

Please join us for 1 session or all 4

- September 10, 2019 5:30 to 7 p.m.
What is Heart Failure - Dr. Stephanie Catanese
- September 24, 2019 5:30 to 7 p.m.
Nutrition - Mary M. Flynn, PhD., RD, LDN
Cooking Demonstration- Chef Noah Metnick of the Waterman Grille
- October 08, 2019 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Medication Management - Marco DelBove, Pharm.D., BCPS
Advanced Care Planning- Jay M. Elias, Esq.
- October 22, 2019 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.
Stress Reduction - Maria Calzado, MSW
Exercise - Nicolette Bastien, BSN, RN, Cert. Yoga Instructor

Seating is limited so register early. Call Kay at (401) 649-4010 x 1007



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