

# The Importance of Sleep Supplement

## Description

During this lesson, students will explore the importance of sleep for college students' health, academic performance, and well-being. Students will be equipped with knowledge and skills to enhance their sleep quality and sleep quantity by addressing sleep hygiene and a sleep friendly environment.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of the lesson, students will:

- Identify two challenges that could impact their sleep hygiene.
- Create three sleep hygiene adjustments that can be made in their routine to enhance their sleep quality and quantity.
- Identify community resources to support their sleep health.

## Connection to Intended Course Outcomes/Class Objectives

- Self-efficacy: Students' personal belief to enhance their sleep quality and quantity is increased by providing students the opportunity to analyze their current sleep routine. Providing this time in the lesson enhances their self-efficacy by guiding them through the first steps to improve their sleep routine.
- Self-awareness: Students have the opportunity to self-reflect on their current sleep routine to become aware of potential behaviors that may impact their sleep. Allowing students to be self-aware during this lesson will allow them to apply this lesson to their own lives and enhance their sleep quality.
- Sense of purpose: It is important for students to prioritize their sleep quality and quantity to be able to excel toward their goals. As students continue growing in their communities it is important they take care of themselves to provide their best effort toward themselves and communities.
- Actively engaged: Sleep provides various positive impacts on students' academia and well-being. This lesson provides students necessary knowledge and skills to enhance their sleep health while being actively engaged.
- Socially integrated: Students will experience various relationships, activities, and behaviors that may make prioritizing their sleep more challenging. This lesson provides students with knowledge and skills to enhance their sleep routine while experiencing these challenges.

## Preparation

- Review the Importance of Sleep Supplement Lesson Plan
  - Direct any questions regarding this lesson plan to [Health Promotion](#)
- Review the Importance of Sleep PowerPoint
- Review the My Sleep Hygiene Worksheet



## Materials

- Sleep Supplement Lesson Plan
- Sleep Supplement PowerPoint
- Physical Copies of My Sleep Hygiene Worksheet (One per Student)
  - Option to email worksheet to students prior to class

## Instruction Overview

Time	Description
15 minutes	The Importance of Sleep Introduction
15 minutes	Sleep Hygiene
10 minutes	Bedroom Simulation
10 minutes	Self-Reflection

## Facilitator Instructions

- Text in regular front are talking points and should be read out loud to students.
- Text in *italics* are notes for the instructor and should NOT be read out loud to students.
- Text in **bold** are questions for debrief or reflection and should be read out loud to students to encourage group discussion or sharing of ideas.

## Instruction Procedure

Prior to Class	
N/A	<i>Review the Importance of Sleep PowerPoint and Lesson Plan</i>  Print out My Sleep Hygiene Worksheet (One copy per student) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• OR email students the My Sleep Hygiene Worksheet</li></ul>
The Importance of Sleep Introduction	
	<i>Slide 1</i> Today we are going to learn about the Importance of Sleep and how we can enhance our sleep quality and sleep environment.  <i>Slide 2</i> Before we dive into today's topic, I would like for us to set the scene by defining health.  <i>Read the World Health Organization definition of health from the slide.</i>



Being healthy encompasses a balance of the eight dimensions of wellness which include physical, emotional, social, occupational, financial, environmental, intellectual, and spiritual. The dimensions of wellness are not isolated areas in our lives; they all equally impact each other in our overall well-being.

*Slide 3*

**Question: Some of you may be asking why we are focusing on sleep. How many of us have had days when we wake up tired and our first thought is - “I cannot wait to go back to sleep”, or catch ourselves sitting at our desk thinking about sleeping?**

*Allow students to raise their hands*

Lack of sleep is very common in our society especially as a college student. Sleep is important for us because it supports holistic health and can prevent chronic conditions. Chronic conditions include diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity, and depression. Sleep supports good health and well-being, specifically our mental and physical health. Sleep enhances brain function, memory, growth, and development. All essential factors for college students to excel.

*Slide 4*

When we do not get the amount of sleep we should be getting, we can experience these common side effects of inadequate sleep.

*Side effects:*

- *Poor memory*
- *Depression*
- *Anxiety*
- *Impaired motor tasks*
- *Increased risk of motor vehicle accidents*
- *Impaired learning*
- *Moodiness*
- *Decreased attention span*
- *Increased risk of academic failure*
- *Lower grade point average*
- *Increased stress*
- *Poor concentration*

A few of these side effects include, impaired motor tasks, increased risk of motor vehicle accidents, impaired learning, moodiness, decreased attention span, lower grade point average, and increased stress. Ensuring we get the quality amount of sleep needed at night can prevent us from experiencing these side effects.

**Question: What are some of the side effects you all may experience after getting a poor night’s rest?**



*Prompt students to share their answers aloud.*

*Slide 5*

While sleep is important for everyone, let's focus specifically why it is important for you all as college students. College students are the most sleep-deprived population when compared to other sub-groups. Lack of sleep causes a lot of concerns for college students, but majority concerns are poor quality of sleep, increased risk to be involved in a drowsy driving accident, and increased risk for sleep disorder.

*Slide 6*

Some college students who experience inadequate sleep patterns may develop a sleep disorder. A sleep disorder is when one experiences changes in sleeping patterns or habits that can negatively affect health. Specifically, 27% of students are at risk for at least one sleep disorder. Examples of sleep disorders are listed here on the slide.

Today's presentation will not be focused on sleep disorders specifically, so it is recommended to visit your primary care provider for questions or concerns regarding sleep disorders. Or visit an American Academy of Sleep Medicine Accredited Sleep Center in your area.

*Slide 7*

American Academy of Sleep Medicine Accredited Sleep Centers which means the center has a board-certified sleep medicine physician who leads a sleep team of trained health care professionals. This is the gold standard for high quality patient-centered care in the sleep field. These are some of the Accredited Sleep Centers in our area.

*View PowerPoint for centers*

*Slide 8*

So how can we ensure we get a good night's rest and prevent inadequate sleep effects? We can start by listening to our biological clock and circadian rhythm, prioritizing sleep, and having good sleep hygiene. We will dive deeper into each component.

*Slide 9*

Let's start with listening to our biological clock. The biological clock is managed by the light and dark our bodies are exposed to. It is controlled by a group of 20,000 brain neurons; called the Suprachiasmatic Nucleus or the SCN. The SCN is constantly receiving information about how light and dark it is and shares that with our body through a communication of protein signals.

When it is light, it tells the body to do certain things and when it is dark it tells the body to stop doing those things and start other things. Due to these actions taken by our SCN our biological clock is our internal clock. It does not know the exact time on the clock but knows when it is time to do things like eat and sleep.



Since our biological clock is what controls our body to do certain actions throughout the day, it is what sets the rhythm that our bodies stick to every day; our circadian rhythm.

The circadian rhythm is the daily cycle of mental, physical, behavioral, or emotional patterns and tasks we perform. Based on the tasks performed, our sleep/wake cycle is affected by energy and tired levels. An example for most is taking a shower. For some, routinely take a shower in the morning before going to work or school and makes them feel awake. Those who routinely take a shower at night then get in bed will feel tired and relaxed after showers because their behavioral pattern is used to sleeping after the shower.

*Slide 10*

The next way we can make sure we get sufficient sleep is by prioritizing our sleep!! We can prioritize our sleep by building certain habits to make sure we get enough sleep each night and we have good quality sleep. College students should be getting 7-8 hours of sleep each night. College students are notoriously known for pulling all-nighters (prolonging or sacrificing sleep for other things).

Most students believe cramming a study session the night before an exam helps them perform well on an exam. However research actually shows individuals who choose all-nighters experience a decrease in their academic performance while those who choose sleep over studying all night perform better in their academics. This goes back to the importance of sleep-- it's important for brain development and growth and memory retention.

Sleep quality is how well we sleep. We can get quality sleep by avoiding frequent disturbances in our sleep hygiene and avoiding oversleeping. Prolonged sleep, like oversleeping or sleeping in, affects our sleep quality causing us to be more tired when we wake up and harder for us to fall asleep at a decent bedtime. Having good quality of sleep enhances our daytime alertness To ensure we prioritize sleep we need to focus on sleep hygiene.

## Sleep Hygiene

*Slide 11*

Let's start our focus on sleep hygiene by defining the term. Sleep hygiene consists of performing voluntary behaviors that support restorative sleep and full daytime alertness. Sleep hygiene is important for physical and mental health and overall quality of life. Having good sleep hygiene also improves daily productivity, and quality of sleep. We can all have good intentions to have good sleep hygiene however there are some challenges that could impact our sleep.



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**Beginning of optional activity.**

**\*Note:** *This content between the bordered lines “-----” is an optional activity - the lesson can be delivered either with or without this optional activity. The activity takes approximately 7 out of the 15 minutes in the sleep hygiene area.*

Let's do an activity to identify some factors that could impact our sleep.

To do this activity, you are going to work in small groups where you all will think of various challenges and factors that could negatively impact the quality and/or quantity of an individual's sleep. The factor may be something such as watching TV or maybe hanging out with friends. You will have two minutes to write some factors down.

Let me break you all into groups.

*Break students into small groups of 3-4 or based on class size.*

Once you are in your groups, select one person to be the spokesperson for your group to report back what your group came up with. You have two minutes!

*Allow two minutes for students to brainstorm.*

*This activity will allow the instructor to have students brainstorm some challenges that could impact sleep before talking about sleep hygiene challenges for college students.*

*After two minutes:*

*Get everyone's attention. Have one person from each group share factors they came up with.*

**What are some sleep hygiene challenges college students could experience?**

*Allow students to share answers aloud. Emphasize answers mentioned on slide 12 and practical challenges that may not be listed.*

Thank you all for sharing some sleep hygiene challenges college students could experience. Let's discuss some that were not mentioned.

*Transition to slide 12 to discuss challenges that were not already shared.*

**End of optional activity.**  
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*Slide 12*

Sleep hygiene challenges may be different for every person however here are common challenges experienced by college students.

*Review each challenge.*

- Technology Use
  - TV
  - Computer
  - Video Games
  - Cell Phone
- Substance Use
  - Caffeine and energy drinks
  - Alcohol
  - Stimulants
- College Schedules and Activities
  - Class schedules – Variable days and times
  - Academic deadlines
  - Part-time or full-time job
  - Late night socializing
  - Early or late-night obligations

Although sleep hygiene challenges are common for college students to experience, let's discuss some good sleep hygiene practices we can use to address these challenges.

*Slide 13*

Limit naps. Taking a lot of naps disrupts our sleep quality and quantity at night time. Many of us may be used to taking naps for hours and may wake up feeling more restless and groggy than we did before. Unfortunately naps cannot make up for a bad night's rest however short naps can help enhance our mood, alertness, and productivity levels. Short naps should only be about 20-30 minutes long and should be taken before 3:00PM to avoid being close to bedtime. We want to avoid taking naps past 3:00PM so they do not interfere with our sleep quality and quantity at night.

Avoid stimulants 4 hours before your scheduled bedtime. These stimulants include sources of caffeine, like coffee, chocolate, tea, and soft drinks, and some drugs such as cocaine, meth, and amphetamines.

While exercise is great for our physical health and can help us sleep, it is important to avoid exercising too close to bedtime as this can cause us to have a hard time falling asleep and disrupt our sleep quality.

Our nutrition plays a critical role in sleep hygiene. Avoid heavy fried or fatty meals, spicy dishes, citrus fruits, and carbonated drinks too close to bedtime.



These foods can trigger indigestion or heartburn for some. Reduce any fluid intake before bed to decrease the chance of disrupting sleep in the middle of night by having to go to the bathroom.

Another practice for good sleep hygiene is using the bed only for sleep. Avoid utilizing the bed for studying, doing homework, watching TV, or browsing through your phone. Doing these activities can disrupt our bodies' association of bed to sleep.

Avoid exposure to blue light before bedtime. Blue light exposure can cause us to stay awake even if we feel tired. Blue light comes from your phone, TV, laptops, and other technology devices. To reduce blue light exposure, try quieting your devices and setting them aside at least two hours before bedtime. Set an alarm to remind yourself when it is time to put devices away! If you need to use these devices before your cut-off time try wearing blue light blocking glasses. These are great to protect our eyes from blue light exposure.

Meditation can also help with good sleep hygiene as it quiets the mind and body settling into a relaxed state. Guided meditations can be found on YouTube.

Another good sleep hygiene practice is to avoid staying in bed if you are just tossing and turning. If you are having trouble getting comfortable or falling asleep after 20 minutes, get out of bed and do a relaxing activity. When you begin to feel tired go back to bed. Remember to only use your bed for sleep.

The last good sleep hygiene practice we will review today is honoring a sleep friendly environment. You want to ensure your place of rest is relaxing and quiet for you to be able to get good quality and quantity of sleep.

Let's dive deeper into honoring a sleep friendly environment.

#### *Slide 14*

You can implement sleep friendly environment behaviors in your bedroom to practice good sleep hygiene. One of the first actions you can do is making sure your bedroom is relaxed and peaceful. You can do this by loving your space and making your wall your favorite color, decorate it with your favorite pictures or other décor. You can also make your room relaxed and peaceful by using soothing scents. Having soothing scents in the room such as lavender relaxes our bodies as it decreases our heart rate and blood pressure.

Loving your room is a great enhancement toward a sleep friendly environment but so is loving your bed. Having a comfortable mattress, pillow, sheets, and blanket can induce your excitement to sleep when you love your bed.

Once you love your room, take care of it by keeping it clean and uncluttered and make your bed every morning. Keeping your room clean includes washing your bed sheets regularly, every 1-2 weeks. Coming home after a long day to a clean fresh bedroom could enhance your mood.





Another way to honor a sleep friendly environment is to dim the lights in the room when getting ready for bed. The lighting in the room can assist our sleep-wake cycle. Make the lights dim in the evening and bright only in the morning, similar to the sunlight during the day and dark at night. You can darken your room by dimming the lights, using blackout curtains, or eye shades. Darkening the room will help your biological clock know it is ready for the body to wind down for sleep.

Cooling down the temperature in the bedroom can honor a sleep friendly environment. Research shows that the best sleep happens at 60-67 degrees Fahrenheit however we know that is nearly impossible to reach here in Texas. A few things we can do to create a cooler environment are leaving blinds closed during the day, using fans, making sure the ceiling fan direction is set to cool, wear light clothing, turn the thermostat down a few degrees at night.

Using fans in your room can also help induce a consistent soothing backdrop noise which enhances a sleep friendly environment. Another option to have a consistent background noise is using a white noise machine or using earplugs. Fluctuating noises during sleep can disrupt our sleep quality and sleep quantity. To avoid fluctuating noises try not to fall asleep with the TV on all night long.

Now that we have reviewed some behaviors that we can perform to honor a sleep friendly environment in our bedrooms let's see if we can apply these behaviors to a bedroom simulation.

**Bedroom Simulation**

*Slide 15*  
 I would like everyone to bring their focus as if it were bedtime. We just completed a long day and we are ready to go to bed in our bedroom shown here on the slide.

Take a few seconds to reflect on our bedroom environment.

*Allow students to reflect on the bedroom environment for a few seconds.*

**What are some things in our bedroom that support a sleep friendly environment?**

Share aloud your answers.

*Allow students to share answers. Debrief as they share*

- *Possible answers:*
  - *Personal touches in room (decor, teddy bear, etc.)*
  - *Plant in room*
  - *Camera is put to the side*



**What are some things we could do differently to honor a sleep friendly environment?**

Share aloud your answers.

*Allow students to share answers. Debrief as students share.*

- *Possible answers:*
  - *Dim the lights*
    - *Close the blinds*
    - *Turn off the lights*
    - *Consider even moving lights off the bed (fire hazard)*
  - *Room is not clean*
    - *Bed is not made*
  - *Books on bed*
  - *White noise machine or fan (in the city the frequent noises could disrupt sleep)*
  - *Avoid heavy food to close to bedtime (Krispy Kreme box on window sill)*

We addressed some factors that could be changed in our sleep environment. Now, let's bring our focus as if we are in bed already.

*Slide 16*

Here we are in bed, reflect on these behaviors for a few seconds.

**Q: What are some things we can avoid doing in these images to support our sleep quality and quantity?**

Share your answers aloud.

*Debrief answers as students share.*

- *Possible answers:*
  - *Top left image*
    - *Put snacks away*
    - *Do not eat too close to bedtime*
    - *Avoid caffeine 4 hours before bedtime*
    - *Sleep in bed*
    - *Dim the lights*
  - *Top right image*
    - *Do not pull all nighters*
    - *Go to bed*
    - *Avoid caffeine 4 hours before bedtime*
    - *Sleep in bed*
    - *Study during day not during bedtime*
    - *Dim the lights*
  - *Bottom left image*
    - *Avoid blue light exposure*
      - *Put phone away 2 hours minutes before bed*
      - *In the evening use blue light glasses*



- *Dim the lights*
  - *Close curtains (light exposure in background)*
- *Bottom right image*
  - *Avoid blue light exposure*
    - *Put phone and laptop away 30 minutes before bed*
  - *Do not pull all nighters*
  - *Sleep in bed*
  - *Dim the lights*

We addressed some behaviors we can avoid in bed to enhance our sleep quality. After reviewing the importance of prioritizing our sleep and how we can enhance our bedroom to become a sleep friendly environment, I want us to self-reflect on our own sleep hygiene.

## Self-Reflection

*Slide 17*

I would like for you all to focus on your current sleep routine and consider what you currently do that could be changed to support good sleep hygiene and a sleep friendly environment. Use the My Sleep Hygiene worksheet provided to you to write down three reasons sleep quality and quantity is important to you and write three sleep hygiene changes that could be made to your current routine to support sleep quality and sleep quantity.

I will give you all three minutes to work on your worksheet before we discuss as a class.

*Give students about three minutes to complete the My Sleep Hygiene worksheet. Notify students when they have one minute remaining.*

Ok go ahead and stop working on your worksheet. If you are not yet finished that is ok but let's discuss it as a class.

**Q: Why do you believe it is important to adjust your sleep routine and what are some sleep routine adjustments you plan on making?**

*Debrief based on students' answers.*

Thank you all for sharing. Today we learned about the importance of sleep and practiced how we can enhance our sleep quality and quantity through sleep hygiene and creating a sleep friendly environment in our bedroom. But now what?

*Slide 18*

It is important to reflect on our own sleep routine to identify realistic bedtime habits that could be changed. We started a reflection today in class however it is good to continue this reflection when you are in your bedroom. Everyone will have a different sleep routine and no sleep routine will look the same. After receiving all this information it may be tempting to do all the things, but start with



making small changes and avoid trying to conquer everything at once. Also, remind yourself that life happens and it is ok. We can attempt to have great sleep hygiene and work towards sleep quality and sleep quantity but sometimes life just happens and it is ok. Just get back on track toward your goals.

*Slide 19*

I hope you are able to apply some of today's lesson to your life to enhance sleep quality and sleep quantity. If you have any questions regarding today's lesson, want to schedule a 1:1 to learn more about interpersonal violence prevention, or want to become more involved in prevention on campus, the Health Promotion office would love to hear from you!! Please feel free to take a picture of their contact information.

Sleep Well!

