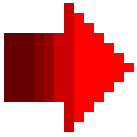




A monthly bulletin of news, facts & tips from OPEN

The Effects of Alcohol and Marijuana on Sleep



Did you know?

- The average undergraduate college student needs 8.5 to 9.25 hours of sleep per night.
- At least two thirds of college students report occasional sleep disturbances.
- Not getting adequate sleep can effect one's academics, physical activity, memory, mood, etc.

Alcohol and Marijuana

Many college students think that moderate drinking or marijuana use has no negative effects on learning and health. However, even small amounts of alcohol and / or marijuana, can impair a person's ability to get a good night's sleep.

- When you're intoxicated or high on marijuana, you may sleep more soundly during the first half of the night. During the second half of the night, however, you'll sleep lightly and be easily woken up.
- Rapid eye movement (REM) decreases during the first half of the night after light to moderate drinking or smoking.
- This is followed by REM rebound during the second half of the night. Drinking alcohol or smoking marijuana will compromise your REM stage of sleep throughout the night.
- Intoxication decreases the deep, restful part of the sleep cycle that the body needs to feel reenergized. Alcohol and marijuana robs people of deep sleep and REM sleep and keeps them in the lighter stages of sleep.

Self medication: Some people use alcohol & marijuana to decrease feelings of stress, irritability, anxiety, insomnia, and depression. While these feelings may decrease in the short term, it may be worth considering alternatives such as counseling or talking to a doctor.



Tips

- Develop a bedtime routine by doing the same thing every night before going to sleep. Give yourself about 30 minutes to get ready for bed.
- Avoid studying right up till bedtime.
- Avoid worrying in bed. Try journaling to help store your thoughts.
- Train your body to sleep at night by going to bed at the same time every day.
- Do not eat, talk on the phone, or do work in bed.
- Make sure that your bedroom is quiet and dark. Use earplugs or a fan to mask any noise that may interfere with your sleep.
- Drink warm milk, or listen to soothing music before going to bed.
- Avoid or limit your use of caffeine, especially in the evening.
- Exercise earlier in the day and avoid exercising within a few hours of going to bed.
- Learn to manage your time and the stress in your life.
- Avoid naps during the day if they interfere with establishing normal sleep patterns.
- Avoid eating a large, late evening meal or heavy fatty foods before going to bed.
- Prepare for the next morning by having your clothes picked out and your books together for the next day.

O.P.E.N.