Alcohol and Marijuana

Many people think that moderate drinking or marijuana use has no negative effects on learning and health. However, even smaller amounts can impair a person’s ability to get a good night’s sleep.

- As alcohol or marijuana are metabolized during the night, sleep becomes progressively lighter and more disturbed.
- Intoxication from alcohol or marijuana decreases the REM cycle that the body needs to feel reenergized.
- When the REM cycle is interrupted, it can take a few days for your natural sleeping patterns to return.

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 affect one’s academics, memory, mood, and even muscle development and growth.

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.

Ways to Get a Good Night’s Sleep

- 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.
- Listen to soothing music before going to bed.
- Avoid or limit your use of caffeine.
- Exercise earlier in the day.
- Avoid naps during the day if they interfere with establishing normal sleep patterns.