

Raffles HealthNews

A PUBLICATION BY *RafflesMedicalGroup*

Sleep Special

Beauty Benefits of Sleep

Seeking the Sandman

- Sleep need not
be elusive



Foods that Disrupt Sleep

BIZARRE

Things You Do in Your Sleep

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HealthNews Contents

Issue 3 | 2016

LIVEWELL

10 COVER STORY

Seeking the Sandman Learn all about insomnia and get makeover tips for your bedroom to improve your sleep quality.

14 Sweet Dreams: Sleep and Your Health

Too much or too little sleep is bad for your health. Find out how sleep affects your health.

16 Travel the World without Jet Lag Flying is becoming increasingly common. Get tips to prevent jet lag.

18 Snore No More Snoring affects not just you but your sleeping partner. Stop it today.

20 Bizarre Things You Do in Your Sleep You are not alone if you do these things in your sleep.

22 Monsters in Your Bed Do you know you share your bed with these monsters?

EATSMART

24 Eat Right, Sleep Tight Consider these foods to promote better sleep!

26 10 Foods that Disrupt Sleep Avoid these foods if you wish to sleep well at night.

UPCLOSE

28 He's the ENT Man Dr Stephen Lee shares about his work and life and dishes out friendly advice on health.

GETGORGEOUS

30 Beauty Benefits of Sleep Sleep deprivation can wreak havoc on your body.

32 Maximise Your Sleep Benefits Make your beauty sleep count by following these tips.

33 Witness The Fitness Learn diet and exercise tips from a personal trainer.

SHAPEUP

34 "Deskercise" Your Way to Better Sleep We recommend cardio exercises you can do by your desk.

36 Finding the Perfect Sleeping Posture Do you wake up with body aches? We share the best sleeping postures.



10



28



36



18



22



33



27



30

*Regulars

4 RMG Directory + Editorial Team

5 Editor's Note

6 Newsroom

38 Ask the Experts

39 Social Media

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Hello Readers!

Snore No More

Learn all about snoring and how to manage it.

Pg 18

Bizarre Things You Do in Your Sleep

Strange things happen at night but they are not unnatural.

Pg 20

"Deskercise" Your Way to Better Sleep

Try these cardio exercises to help you sleep better.

Pg 34

Sleep plays an important part in our lives as we spend at least one third of our time snoozing. Sleep quality and quantity can be compromised by the modern busy and hectic lifestyle.

Insomnia is a common problem that most people experience and is often due to stress, lifestyle factors or medical conditions. If the problem is severe or prolonged a visit to the doctor may help. However, you can also try changing your lifestyle and habits to reduce interference to your sleep (see pages 10 to 13). Another sleep problem is sleeping too much which might be due to a condition known as hypersomnia (see pages 14 to 15).

Diet plays a part in getting quality sleep. For example, eating hard-boiled eggs as a night time snack and steering clear of high-carb or sugary food at night can be conducive to a restful night. Find out what other foods are beneficial for you and what you should avoid in order to rest well at night (see pages 24 to 27).

Lack of sleep can damage your health. Learn about the amount of sleep needed for you and your family (see page 31) and the best sleeping posture (see pages 36 to 37) to stay healthy, happy and beautiful.

I hope the articles in this issue will provide you with deeper insight into sleep and improve your health. Start today, optimise your sleeping habits today for a healthier you!

Let us know how we can improve our Raffles Health News! Share your insights with us by taking a short survey at <http://tinyurl.com/rhnsurvey16>.

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* Also, don't forget to subscribe to our monthly e-Healthnews at healthnews@rafflesmedical.com

Dr Sarah Jane Packer

Family Physician,
Associate Consultant
Raffles Medical



New Docs on the Block

We warmly welcome the following doctors to the Raffles family!
With their addition, we hope to better serve your healthcare needs.

Dr Nur Farhan Bte Mohammad Alami
Specialist in Geriatric Medicine & Consultant
Raffles Internal Medicine Centre



Dr Nur Farhan is accredited as a specialist in Geriatric Medicine by the Specialist Accreditation Board. Her qualifications include MBBS (Singapore) and MRCP (UK). Prior to joining Raffles Hospital, Dr Nur Farhan was a Geriatrician at Changi General Hospital. She was appointed Clinical Lecturer at NUS and core faculty member of the Singhealth Senior Residency Program in Geriatric Medicine.

Dr Lee Su Ann
Specialist in Diagnostic Radiology & Consultant
Raffles Diagnostica



Dr Lee Su Ann obtained her basic medical degree from the University of Dundee, United Kingdom in 2006. She was awarded Fellowship of the Royal College of Radiologists (UK) and Masters of Medicine (Diagnostic Radiology, SG) in 2013. She then completed Advanced Specialist Training in Diagnostic Radiology in 2015. Prior to joining Raffles Hospital, Dr Lee was working in Changi General Hospital.

RMG Celebrates 40 Years of Caring

Raffles Medical Group celebrated 40 years of caring with an anniversary dinner at the Shangri-La Hotel on 23 July 2016. The event was graced by Guest-of-Honour Mr Gan Kim Yong, Minister for Health, and attended by corporate clients, partners and friends of the Group.

As part of its 40th anniversary celebrations, the Group pledged a donation of S\$1 million to the National Kidney Foundation (NKF). The donation will go towards the setting up of the Raffles-NKF Renal Wellness Centre at Raffles Hospital as well as a Raffles-NKF Peritoneal Dialysis & Wellness Centre later this year at Whampoa.

In addition, the Group announced it is committing S\$4 million to award 40 scholarships over the next five years to students wishing to develop careers in healthcare.



Missing Type Campaign 2016

On 16 to 21 August 2016, Raffles Medical Group participated in an International Missing Type campaign. Organised by the Health Sciences Authority (HSA) and the Singapore Red Cross (SRC), the campaign seeks to raise public awareness on the importance of blood donation.

Multi-disciplinary Medical Centre in Raffles Holland V Mall

Raffles opened a 9,000 square feet multi-disciplinary medical centre in Holland Village on 14 June 2016. Raffles Medical Centre - Holland V aims to become a comprehensive medical destination for those residing in Holland Village and the surrounding areas. Raffles Medical Centre - Holland V offers:

- Raffles Medical: Family Medicine services
- Raffles Health Screeners: health screening services
- Raffles Specialists: dermatology and medical aesthetics; obstetrics and gynaecology, and paediatric care
- Raffles Dental: dental care services
- Raffles Chinese Medicine: traditional Chinese medicine services

Dr Prem Kumar Nair, Managing Director, Singapore Healthcare at Raffles Medical Group, said: "Holland Village is a popular lifestyle destination for both locals and expatriates, and we are excited at the opportunity to bring our healthcare services closer to them."

For enquiries, please call 6250 1411.

**118 Holland Avenue, Raffles Holland V, Level 5
Singapore 278997**



Living Pain Free

Raffles Hospital held its orthopaedic health seminar featuring our specialists from Raffles Orthopaedic Centre on 20 August 2016. The speakers for the seminar included Dr Lim Yeow Wai, Dr Ganesan Naidu, Dr Bernard Lin, Dr Lee Eu Jin, and Dr Victor Seah.

The successful event was hosted by Channel NewsAsia presenter Teresa Tang to a full-house crowd. During the seminar, the doctors shared professional insights and advice for treating common orthopaedic conditions affecting the young to the elderly.



Wellness at Every Stage of Your Life Seminar

On Saturday, 6 August 2016, Raffles Hospital and Berita Harian jointly organised a seminar in ageing well at the Singapore Press Holdings Auditorium. An enthusiastic crowd of more than 350 participants attended the event. Dr Abdul Razakir Bin Omar, Dr Stanley Liew, Dr Jazlan Joosop and Dr Nur Farhan Bte Mohammad Alami shared about how to manage complex chronic issues such as heart diseases, diabetes and dementia in the golden years.

Hosted by Ms Shahida Binte Sarhid, Journalist of Berita Harian, the event was very well received with additional tickets sold to accommodate the overwhelming response. The Q&A sessions had to be extended as many participants seized the opportunity to understand certain issues better from the panel of experts.

Our Heartiest Congratulations to...

We congratulate Ms Helen Espina Cruz, Senior Lactation Consultant at Raffles Hospital's Neonatal ICU and Nursery for winning the Ministry of Health Nurses' Merit Award 2016, for her outstanding performance and dedication to the nursing profession.

Started in 1976, the Nurses' Merit Award is given to nurses who have demonstrated consistent and outstanding performance for the past three years, participated in professional development and have made contributions to promote the nursing profession.

"Caring for babies, whether they are born premature or develop sickness after birth, greatly humbles me. I know that with every task I do, it will aid parents by lessening their anxieties during what can be very difficult times." Said Helen, "Receiving this award brought me to tears as I knew that I was being recognised for doing what I love the most."



Ms Helen Cruz (second from right) at the Nurses' Merit Award presentation.

Manage Sleep Apnoea

Behaviours can impact daily sleeping habits over the years. You can dramatically improve sleep quality by adjusting your lifestyle and attitude towards sleeping. At Raffles Hospital, we offer you a comprehensive sleep apnoea treatment plan that is non-invasive and can be done at the comfort in your own home.

2 consultations
(Initial and Review)

Sleep study

Package Price

\$1315
(w/o GST)

**For enquiries, please call 6311 2000 or
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#happinurse

On the 1st of August, Raffles Medical Group planned a day of celebrations for our nurses in appreciation of their commitment, care and passion in their jobs. The 500 nurses across Raffles Medical clinics and Raffles Hospital were surprised with colourful balloons, an endless buffet line as well as attractive prizes and gifts.

A highlight to the day's celebration was when MediaCorp celebrities - Chase Tan, Xu Bin, Aloysius Pang, Carrie Wong and Shelia Sim - came to Raffles Hospital during lunch time to pay our nurses a surprise visit.

Representing Raffles Hospital, SSN Grace Tan starred in the Care To Go Beyond nurses anthem music video together with SSN Hershey Alojado, SSN Siti Aisyah Binte Salleh and SSN Zhuo Xiaoying. Grace was also featured on the Today paper.

Thank you nurses for being the heartbeat of Raffles!

Fragrance Empire Building clinic opens

From July 2016, Mapletree Business City clinic has relocated to Fragrance Empire Building



Address

Fragrance Empire Building
456 Alexandra Road
#01-09 / 10
Singapore 119962

Telephone

6570 6970

Operating Hours

Mon to Fri:
8.30am – 1.00pm
2.00pm – 5.30pm

Compass One clinic opens

Compass One clinic is now open. The clinic offers a mix of medical and dental services.



Address

1 Sengkang Square
#04-09
Compass One
Singapore 545078

Telephone

6385 5067 (Dental)
6385 5057 (Medical)

Operating Hours

Mon to Fri:
8.30am - 9.30pm

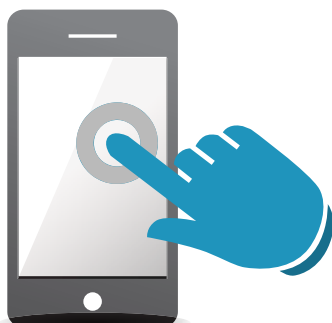
Sat / Sun / PH:
8.30am - 1.00pm
2.00pm - 5.30pm
6.30pm - 9.30pm

Access Medical Information at Your Fingertips

Raffles Medical Group's mobile app allows you to:

- Search for doctors
- Search for clinics based on location and operating hours
- Access doctor profiles and clinic information
- Book an appointment
- Read up on the latest patient education materials
- Access other services

The app is available on Google Play and the App Store. Download it today and access information about Raffles Medical Group's full suite of services from your mobile device!



Fight Against Colorectal Cancer



Colorectal cancer is highly treatable in its early stages. To increase early detection of colorectal cancers in Singapore, Raffles Hospital will be offering FOBT (Faecal Occult Blood Test) kits and screenings for the whole year in 2016.

Collect your FOBT test kit from any Raffles Medical clinic or Raffles Hospital.

For enquiries, please call 6311 1152 or email to surgerycentre@rafflesmedical.com

Seeking the Sandman

Ever find yourself having difficulty falling or staying asleep? Or do you feel tired despite having spent hours in bed? You're not alone. Getting quality sleep is a growing problem, no thanks to the hustle and bustle of modern life. Learn from our medical experts on why insomnia happens and what you can do about it. [By Stanley Wong](#)



Many of us experience sleeplessness from time to time, which can be frustrating. This is normal. However, it becomes a problem when your insomnia gets prolonged to the point that it interferes with your memory or everyday activities, or it lasts for three months or more. When this happens, you should see a doctor for help.

Common symptoms of insomnia include:

- Being unable to fall sleep despite feeling tired
- Difficulty staying asleep, with frequent awakening or problems returning to sleep after awakening
- Not feeling refreshed after waking up
- Daytime fatigue, difficulty concentrating or performing normal activities
- Anxiety as bedtime approaches

What Causes Insomnia?

Whilst commonly associated with stress, insomnia can also be a result of your lifestyle. Here are some common psychological and physiological factors contributing to it:



Disrupted Circadian Rhythms

Think of your circadian rhythm as a "clock" which regulates your biological patterns, including your desire to sleep. This can be disrupted by your lifestyle, such as working shift

work, which confuses your body clock, or when you have developed a habit of sleeping and waking up late.



Diabetes

People with diabetes cannot manage their blood sugar levels, either due to their cells responding poorly to insulin, or their pancreas not producing enough of it. As a result, night sweats or a frequent need to urinate can interrupt their sleep. If diabetes has damaged the leg nerves, sleep may also be disturbed by night time movements or pain.

Musculoskeletal Disorders



Disorders

During sleep, our muscles relax to prevent us from moving around and hurting ourselves. "When you have musculoskeletal disorders of the joints, such as chronic back pain or arthritis, they can cause you enough pain to interfere with your sleep", said

Dr Chong Yong Yeow, Specialist in Rheumatology & Consultant, Raffles Internal Medicine Centre.



GERD / Heartburn

People with GERD or heartburn may find their symptoms are worse when lying down. This is due to the stomach acid backing up into the oesophagus,

which may cause pain and the familiar burning sensation in the chest, interfering with the ability to sleep.

Dementia

Due to disrupted brain functions



and altered sleep regulation, it may be difficult for the elderly with dementia to fall asleep. According to Dr Nur Farhan, Specialist in Geriatric Medicine & Consultant, Raffles Internal

Medicine Centre, people with dementia may feel disorientated and agitated during the evening and night due to a condition known as "sundowning", where behaviour issues arise after sunset. This may cause distress not only to the elderly, but also their caregivers, who need to supervise them constantly.

Psychological Conditions

Under stressful situations, your nervous system becomes hyper-aroused, activating your "fight or flight" mechanism. Stress hormones like cortisol and norepinephrine flood your body, triggering responses like an increased heart rate and blood pressure, making you more alert. A prolonged state of hyper-arousal leaves

your brain and body racing despite feeling tired, leaving you unable to sleep even when it is time to do so. Similarly, feeling worried or anxious can affect your sleep. Whether you are caught up with thoughts about the past or the future, they keep you awake. For some

people, the thought of being unable to sleep itself causes anxiety. The anxiety and insomnia feed into each other, leading to a vicious cycle.



Makeover Your Bedroom For Better Sleep

Aside from seeing a doctor, you can take steps to reduce interference to your sleep by improving your sleeping environment. Your bedroom is not just a place for you to sleep. It is also your sanctuary where you can retreat from the stressors of life and rejuvenate yourself.

Dr Joshua Kua, Specialist in Psychiatry & Consultant, Raffles Counselling Centre, shares tips to help make your bedroom a more conducive place to sleep in.

■ Remove unwanted sources of light

Light prevents the production of the sleep-inducing hormone melatonin, making it harder for you to fall and stay asleep. Consider keeping your room dark by blocking off sources of ambient light. Use curtains to block off streetlights, and hide your alarm clock from view.

■ Unplug technology

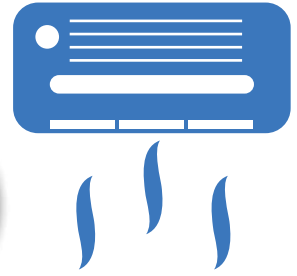
While modern technology keeps us connected and raises our productivity, it is also a source of distraction if used inappropriately. Playing a mobile game before bedtime, or even responding to emails stimulates our brain and makes our body tense, creating a situation not conducive for sleep. Disconnecting from technology can help our brain unwind to prepare for sleep.



- **Keep your room neat and tidy**
A cluttered room represents unfinished tasks, which may lead your brain to interpret it as an undone chore. Minimise distractions by keeping your room clean and tidy.



- **Turn on the air-conditioning**
A lower room temperature improves sleep quality because it helps lower your body temperature to achieve deep sleep.



- **Examine your room's colour scheme**
Your sleep can be affected by your wall and bedding colour. If you want to repaint your bedroom, go for shades of blue as it represents calmness. Alternatively, soothing colours work too! Where possible, avoid bright colours, as they may create a stimulating environment that works against relaxing or resting.



- **Block off external noises**
If you stay in a noisy neighbourhood, consider wearing earplugs or using heavy blinds to buffer noises such as heavy traffic or animal sounds, as they may wake you when you are in the shallower cycles of sleep.



Sweet Dreams: Sleep and Your Health

Getting enough sleep is important; but what happens if you have too much or too little sleep over an extended period of time? By Noel Lee



INSOMNIA: too little sleep

Insomnia is most commonly associated with stress along with some other conditions. Find out what happens to your body if you suffer from insomnia for an extended period of time.

Brain

According to Dr Chua Siew Eng, Specialist in Psychiatry & Consultant, Raffles Counselling Centre, chronic insomnia can lead to depression if not managed early. TCM Physician Goh You Li, Raffles Chinese Medicine, added that TCM views insomnia as a *Yin–Yang* imbalance and such imbalance may cause persisting irritability and headaches, leading to depression.

heart failure

Sleep is essential for a healthy heart. No one is exactly sure why less sleep is detrimental to one's health. According to Dr Alvin Ng, Specialist in Cardiology & Consultant, Raffles Heart Centre, studies have shown that adults who have less than six hours of sleep every night are twice as likely to suffer from a heart attack as compared to those who have proper sleep.

Diabetes

Studies have shown that insufficient sleep can also lead to Type 2 diabetes. Dr Nitish Mishra, Specialist in Endocrinology & Consultant, Raffles Diabetes & Endocrine Centre, shared that sleep deprivation can lead to a pre-diabetic state. "Sleep deprivation leads to hormonal changes, increasing insulin resistance. Appetite is also upregulated promoting adiposity. All this may cause double or triple the risk of diabetes."

Ageing skin

Dr Tan Siew Kiang, Specialist in Dermatology & Consultant, Raffles Skin & Aesthetics, shared that studies report that chronic poor sleep quality is associated with increased signs of intrinsic ageing, diminished skin barrier function, and increased trans-epidermal water loss from the skin and drier skin. She further explained that our skin is most active between 10pm and 2am and when people are awake at this time, their skin will be less able to repair itself, leading to premature skin ageing.

HYPERSONMIA: too much sleep

It might be a dream come true for someone to be able to sleep the entire day away, but what happens if you turn into a real-life Sleeping Beauty?

For some, hypersomnia is a real problem. Signs include excessive sleepiness and uncontrollable episodes of falling asleep during the daytime. Most people who suffer from hypersomnia may not know they have it, preventing them from seeking professional help. Just like insomnia, if not taken care of, it can lead to problems with your health.

Brain

Dr David Choy, Specialist in Neurology & Consultant, Raffles Neuroscience Centre, shared: "Hypersomnia can be a sign of other more serious neurological problems like brain tumours or lesions affecting the hypothalamus or brainstem. If someone were to suffer from hypersomnia for some time, he should seek medical attention to evaluate the cause as the underlying condition may be potentially life-threatening."

Obesity

Obesity is one of the risk factors for excessive daytime sleepiness or hypersomnia. According to Dr Raymond Choy, General Practitioner, Raffles Medical – Airport Terminal 3, hypersomnia can be secondary to obesity. No one is exactly sure why, but researchers have argued that hypersomnia is usually associated with an increased appetite and eventually weight gain.

Sleep Apnoea

Sleep apnoea happens when breathing is disrupted during sleep. This causes a lower quality of sleep, making the person feel more tired during the day. Dr Stephen Lee, Specialist in ENT Surgery & Consultant, Raffles ENT Centre said: "Sleep apnoea is the most common cause of hypersomnia, affecting four per cent of the population."

Travel the World without Jet Lag

As air travel becomes increasingly common, it is not surprising to see the trend of growing long-distance travellers. Learn more about jet lag and tips to prevent it. **By Alan Lim**

Understanding Jet Lag

Jet lag is a sleep disorder that is a reaction to traveling between time zones. It can also be caused by shift work. In short, it is a confused and disrupted internal body clock set at a different time to the time zone in which people find themselves. Our internal body clock is made up of cells with unique 'body clock' genes. These cells tell other parts of the body what time it is and what to do. Jet lag kicks in when this internal body clock is disrupted.

Jet lag is a temporary sleep disorder, but not temporary enough for many travellers. This is because traveling between time zones changes the "morning patterns" and "night patterns" in your environment, thus affecting the body's rhythms. A change of a few hours may not seem significant, but it is enough to affect the body's sleep-wake cycle.

The effect of jet lag can be overwhelming enough to affect one's performance. People suffering from jet lag might experience tiredness, general malaise, poor attention and insomnia. They can also present with poor appetite, nausea, vomiting and constipation.

How to Survive Long Haul Flights

Since we are being confined in an aircraft for hours, it is true that we do not really sleep well. But to make your next long-haul international flight just a little less excruciating, here are some tips which work well for most people. You can start by avoiding drinks or snacks which are high in sodium before boarding. You can also do some stretching exercises in your seat or along the aisle during the flight.

Ways to Avoid Jet Lag

Travellers try to make the most of their limited time overseas, and fail to take into account the leap in time zones they make. It can take your body's internal clock days to catch up. Dr Raymond Choy, General Practitioner, Raffles Medical Changi Airport Terminal 3, provides us with tips to minimise the symptoms of jet lag.

1. Adjust body clock

Some studies have shown that attempting to advance or delay your body clock gradually before you travel can make the adjustment faster and easier on your body, reducing the effects of jet lag. Avoid travelling when you are already tired, and rest before departure.



2. Stay on home time

Three days or less, for instance, is barely enough time for your body to adjust to the new time zone, so it may not be worth the effort to adjust your schedule if you will not be there for long. On the other hand, if you are travelling for more than four days or across more than five time zones, you will probably benefit from planning how you can adjust to the new time zone as fast as possible.



3. Exercise

Exercises like walking, brisk walking or jogging might help one to adapt to the new time zone more quickly. It's a good idea to avoid heavy commitments on the first day. So make your first day of travel fuss-free and plan in some light exercises to ward off serious jet lag problems.



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No More

Courtesy of the Mayo Clinic News Network
By Anita Gopal

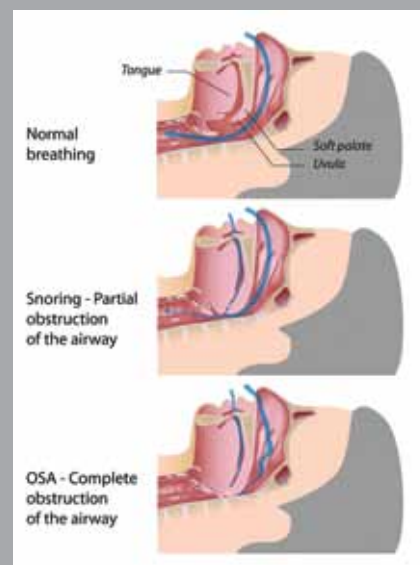


Snoring occasionally is not very serious and is probably just a nuisance for your roomies. However, snoring frequently can affect the quantity and more importantly the quality of your sleep and may potentially result in daytime fatigue. Read to learn more about the causes of snoring and some lifestyle remedies so that you will snore no more!

What is Snoring?

Snoring is the hoarse or harsh sound that occurs when your breathing is partially obstructed in some way while you're sleeping. When you doze off and progress from a light sleep to a deep sleep, the muscles in the roof of your mouth (soft palate), tongue and throat relax. These tissues in your throat can relax enough that they partially block your airway and vibrate.

Many factors, such as the anatomy of your mouth and sinuses, alcohol consumption, allergies, a cold, and your weight, can lead to snoring. Snoring may also be associated with Obstructive Sleep Apnoea (OSA). In this serious condition, your throat tissues may partially or completely block your airway, preventing you from breathing normally.



A little more about OSA

OSA is a potentially serious sleep disorder. This type of apnoea occurs when your throat muscles intermittently relax and block your airway during sleep. It causes breathing to repeatedly stop and start during sleep. A noticeable sign of OSA is snoring.

Treatments for OSA are available. One treatment involves using a device that keeps your airway open while you are sleep. Another option is a mouthpiece to thrust your jaw forward during sleep. In more severe cases, surgery may be an option too.

8 Lifestyle Remedies for Snoring

1 If you're overweight, lose weight

People who are overweight may have extra tissues in the throat that contribute to snoring. Losing weight can help reduce snoring.



4 Nasal strips or an external nasal dilator

Adhesive strips applied to the bridge of the nose help many people increase the area of their nasal passage, enhancing their breathing. A nasal dilator is a stiffened adhesive strip applied externally across the nostrils that may help decrease airflow resistance so you breathe easier.



7 Limit or avoid alcohol

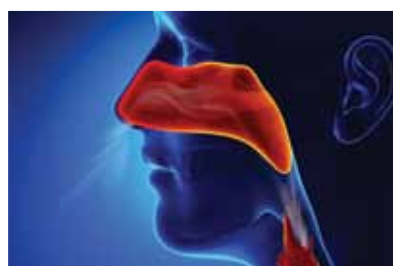
Avoid drinking alcoholic beverages at least two hours before bedtime, and let your doctor know about your snoring before taking sedatives. Sedatives and alcohol depress your central nervous system, causing excessive relaxation of muscles, including the tissues in your throat.



5 Treat nasal congestion or obstruction

Having allergies or a deviated septum can limit airflow through your nose. This forces you to breathe through your mouth, increasing the likelihood of snoring.

To correct a structural defect in your airway, such as a deviated septum, you may need surgery.



8 Get enough sleep

Adults should aim for at least 7 to 8 hours of sleep per night. The recommended hours of sleep for children vary by age. Preschool-aged children should get 11 to 12 hours a day. School-age children need at least 10 hours a day, and teens should have nine to 10 hours a day. Sleep deprivation makes you overtired and when you finally call it a night, you sleep hard and deep, and the muscles in the throat become relaxed, which creates snoring.



2 Sleep on your side

Snoring is typically most frequent and loudest when sleeping on the back. Gravity's effect allows your tongue to fall backward into your throat, narrowing your airway and partially obstructing airflow. Try sleeping on your side.



3 Raise the head of your bed

Raising the head of your bed by about four inches may help in allowing air to go in and out more easily.

6

Quit smoking

Smoking cessation may reduce snoring, in addition to having numerous other health benefits.



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BIZARRE

THINGS YOU DO IN YOUR SLEEP

Strange things happen in the wee hours of the night. We share four bizarre things that happen in your sleep that may surprise you and your sleeping partner. *By Alan Lim*

In 2014, a report ranked Singapore as one of the top three most sleep-deprived countries. While sleep is instinctive, some, unfortunately, have to deal with a variety of common sleep disorders. Find out what they are.



Grinding and Gnashing of Teeth: Bruxism

Also known as bruxism, the act of grinding, gnashing or clenching your teeth unconsciously during the day or at night can be linked to factors such as anxiety, stress, alcohol consumption, cigarette smoking, caffeine, snoring and fatigue.

Although the causes of sleep bruxism are unknown, it has been estimated that approximately 3 per cent of Singaporeans suffer from it. This number may be even higher because many affected do not know they grind their teeth," said Dr Michael Wong, Family Physician & Consultant, Raffles Medical. In children, it is typically a

self-limited problem and rarely requires intervention. In contrast, bruxism in adults can cause severe damage to the teeth and is associated with headaches, jaw aches and wearing out of teeth.

Dr Wong shares factors that may lead to bruxism:

- Increased anxiety or stress
- Aggressive, competitive or hyperactive personality
- Stimulating substances such as tobacco, caffeinated beverages or alcohol

Walking Dead: Sleep Walking

Sleepwalking is a behaviour disorder that originates during deep sleep and results in the sleepwalker walking or engaging in other behaviours while asleep. Because a sleepwalker typically remains in deep sleep throughout the episode, he or she may be difficult to awaken and will probably not remember the sleepwalking incident.

"Sleepwalking occurs more often in children than adults, with most children growing out of it by the time they reach puberty. It occurs in about 15 per cent of children, peaking between age eight and 12 years old," Dr Wong explains.

For adults, the onset of sleepwalking is usually not associated with any

significant underlying psychiatric or psychological problems. There is no specific treatment for sleepwalking. Improving sleep hygiene may eliminate the problem and it is important to establish a regular and relaxing routine prior to bedtime.

Sleepwalkers are encouraged to ensure a safe sleep environment by:

- Avoid sleeping in a double-decker bed
- Removing any sharp objects from the area near the bed
- Locking the doors and windows in your home before sleeping





Cold Wet Bed: Bedwetting

Bedwetting is a common problem, occurring in about 10% of children aged five and above. It may cause embarrassment and affect peer relationships. Dr Chua Siew Eng, Specialist in Psychiatry and Consultant, Raffles Counselling Centre, shares that bedwetting causes may be psychological due to developmental issues or stress.

So does bedwetting only apply to children? The answer is no. "Bedwetting persists in about 1 per cent of the adult population. Diabetes,

urinary tract infections, bladder instabilities or breathing issues during sleep can cause adults to wet their beds," Dr Chua added.

Treatment options are available for bedwetting. Undoubtedly, it is best to seek medical advice to identify the cause. Other options can include setting an alarm to wake the individual before urination occurs, taking medication to reduce urination, reducing water intake and emptying the bladder before sleeping.



Night Chats: Sleep Talking

Sleep talking is a sleep disorder that involves unconscious talking during sleep. It varies in its content and presentation, ranging from mumbling, gibberish and nonsensical words to full, complicated, coherent narratives. Sleep talking can be spontaneous, or induced by others chatting with the sleeping individual. This nocturnal language can even sound different from their normal speaking voice.

Just like sleepwalking, sleep talking may be brought on by stress,

depression, sleep deprivation, day-time drowsiness, alcohol, and fever. Sleep-talking often occurs concurrently with other parasomnias such as sleepwalking and night terrors.

"In rare cases, adult-onset frequent sleep talking is associated with a psychiatric disorder or nocturnal seizures. Sleep talking associated with mental or medical illness occurs more commonly in persons over 25 years of age," says Dr Wong.



MONSTERS IN YOUR BED

Forget about the boogeyman hiding under your bed. There are far scarier 'monsters' living in your bed. We find out how they can cause chaos to your health.

SYMPTOMS

HOW THEY ATTACK



Dust Mites

- Rhinitis (runny nose)
- Breathing problems
- Asthma
- Hives
- Eczema

- Feed on the flakes of skin that people shed
- Allergens in dust mite droppings cause allergy symptoms, and aggravate respiratory and skin issues.



Bed Bugs

- Itchy skin
- Bite marks

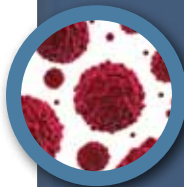
- Small, oval, brownish insects that feed off their prey's blood at night.
- Are typically found in mattresses, box springs, bed frames, and headboards



Mould

- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Itchy eyes
- Eczema
- Asthma

- Moisture and body secretions that seep into your mattress causes mould to breed.
- Mould spores can cause allergic symptoms



Bacteria

- Skin and wound infections
- Urinary tract infections
- Pneumonia

- Caused by bacteria build up over the years, eg. Staphylococcus aureus bacteria, including antibiotic resistant strains



Lice

- Itchy skin
- Bite marks

- Infests dirty beds that are not well maintained
- Feeds on human blood and causes itching that may worsen

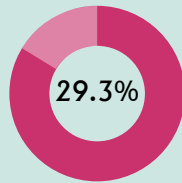
MONSTER HACK:

One way to reduce bed bug bites is to use double sided tape and make a line around the side of the bed at the top of the mattress. This creates a bed bug trap.

- Dr Stephen Lee, Specialist in ENT Surgery & Consultant, Raffles ENT Centre

Staying Abreast of Cancer

Breast Cancer Statistics in Singapore



Breast cancer accounts for 29.3% of female cancer



1 in 14 Singaporean women will get breast cancer



More than 1,500 new cases per year

Recommended Guidelines for Breast Cancer Screening

* Health Promotion Board, Singapore

AGE under 40



no need for screening

AGE 40 to 49



annual screening

AGE 50 to 69



once every 2 years

Mammogram is an X-ray of the breast that takes pictures of the fat, fibrous tissues, ducts, lobes, and blood vessels. Studies have showed that it reduces the rate of death from breast cancer to 23%.

While mammography is useful in detecting lumps, it cannot confirm if a lump is cancerous. To do that, tissue must be removed for examination. This is done via needle biopsy or open surgical biopsy.

Screening Mammogram at

- Marina Bay Financial Centre
- Raffles Holland V
- Shaw Centre

\$70
(Price exclusive of GST)

Screening Mammogram at

- Raffles Hospital

\$100
(Price exclusive of GST)

* We accept Singapore Cancer Society Pink Card for screening of eligible ladies from 1st October 2016 to 31 January 2017.

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Eat right, sleep tight

By Alan Lim

Are you tired of counting sheep at night? Having trouble sleeping can be frustrating. You may know that hitting the sack at the same time every night and putting your smartphones away before bedtime can help achieve optimal sleep health. But do you know that what you eat, especially for dinner, can also play an important role at bedtime?

Dr Jonathan Goh, General Practitioner, Raffles Medical, recommends some sleep-inducing foods to ensure a restful night's sleep.



1. Hard Boiled Eggs

If you have trouble staying asleep at night, try eating a pre-bedtime snack high in protein. Avoid snacks that are high in simple, high-sugar carbohydrates, such as cakes and candy. Eggs are rich sources of protein, which fills you up, helping you stay asleep through the night. If you're not a fan of hard-boiled eggs, try having scrambled eggs or an omelette at dinner.

2. Walnuts

Tryptophan raises melatonin and serotonin levels in the body, which in turn induce sleep. While all nuts have some tryptophan, cashews and walnuts take the lead with the highest amounts. Walnuts also contain melatonin to help you ease into sleep. Try sprinkling nuts on a salad, in a pasta dish, or with roasted vegetables to add crunch, flavour and protein.



3. Bananas

Bananas are a great source of magnesium. They also serve up some tryptophan along with other vital nutrients, so they're the perfect guilt-free snack to have at night. Make a banana smoothie with soy milk for a sweet bedtime treat.



4. Miso Soup

If you plan on having a late dinner, make a bowl of miso soup. Miso is made from soy and contains many amino acids, including tryptophan. Those amino acids can also increase the production of melatonin. If you haven't been sleeping well lately, have a bowl of miso soup for dinner to help fight your insomnia.



5. Milk

Was your grandmother right when she said that drinking a glass of milk before bed would help you sleep at night? Milk is a sleep supporter because it has tryptophan. Besides, milk is high in calcium and research has shown that calcium deficiency can lead to disturbed sleep patterns.



Brew Yourself A Good Night's Sleep

Drinking a cup of warm tea can calm the mind, paving the way for good sleep. Floral teas, in particular, have relaxing properties as well. We introduce some teas you can consider making to help you enter dream land faster.

Chamomile Tea

One of the most well-known teas, dried chamomile flowers can be brewed in boiling water to make a soothing herbal infusion to help you drift off.



Peppermint Tea

Digestive discomfort can often be a cause for disturbed sleep, so if you've had a big meal before bed, peppermint tea could be just what you need to relax and help you sleep comfortably.



Green Tea

Theanine in green tea is believed to improve sleep quality and lower anxiety. Therefore, you can sip on a cup of green tea before bed and let it send you off to sleep!



Lavender Tea

Not only is lavender anti-inflammatory, it is also supposed to reduce anxiety. On top of that, it is good for your gut and your brain.



Read the Tea Leaves...

While tea leaves may be high in caffeine, tea actually has less caffeine than coffee. Herbal teas, in fact, have no caffeine in them. So you need not worry about it disrupting your sleep.

So consider getting a nice warm cup of herbal tea tonight to help you fall asleep with its soothing effects.

Eat Your Way to Better Sleep



Lily tremella porridge

Physician Zhao Xu Hong, Senior TCM Physician, Raffles Chinese Medicine, shares a TCM recipe in which you can prepare within an hour to eat your way to better sleep.

Ingredients:

- Glutinous rice 50 g
- Green bean 50 g
- Lily 20 g
- Red dates x 20
- Appropriate amount of rock sugar
- Appropriate amount of Chinese wolfberries

"Besides relieving sleep-related symptoms, this porridge helps to soothe the nerves, eliminates fatigue, enhances physical fitness and can also prevent dry cough," says Physician Zhao.

Steps:

1. Firstly, cook the green beans till they are half-cooked.
2. Add in lily, red dates and glutinous rice.
3. Cook till it becomes soft like porridge. Recommended to take it once in the day and once at night.



10 Foods that Disrupt Sleep

Yesterday's dinner could be to blame for your bleary eyes today. We compile a list of 10 foods to steer clear of for a good night's sleep.

1 Caffeinated drinks

Caffeine is a stimulant and gives our bodies an extra energy boost. For better sleep, avoid caffeinated beverages at least four to six hours before turning in.



2 Alcohol

Think an alcoholic nightcap can help you nod off? Alcohol can interfere with sleep patterns and cause random awakenings at night due to its diuretic properties.



3 Dark chocolate

Dark chocolate may be good for your heart, however, taking it before bedtime can get your heart racing as it contains caffeine and other stimulants.



4 Greasy or fat filled foods

Foods that are greasy, heavy, and fatty will make the stomach work overtime if devoured directly before bed.



5 Red meat and other proteins



Red meat consumed late at night will not be digested properly and will sit in your stomach all night long. However, late-night protein is okay if taken in moderation.

6 High-carb or sugary foods

High-carb and sugary foods can raise blood sugar levels and cause energy levels to be out of sync. Such foods contribute to irregular sleeping patterns if consumed late at night.



7 Spicy foods

Foods that are spicy or peppery can result in an upset stomach, activate your senses and keep you up at night.



8 Veggies

Most leafy greens are natural diuretics that can cause a person to experience frequent urination. Broccoli, cabbage, beans, cucumbers and garlic are hard to digest and can result in gas.



9 Fluids

Avoid drinking too much liquid (unless you are thirsty) for at least 60-90 minutes before bedtime. You are sure to have interrupted sleep if you're constantly getting up to go to the bathroom.



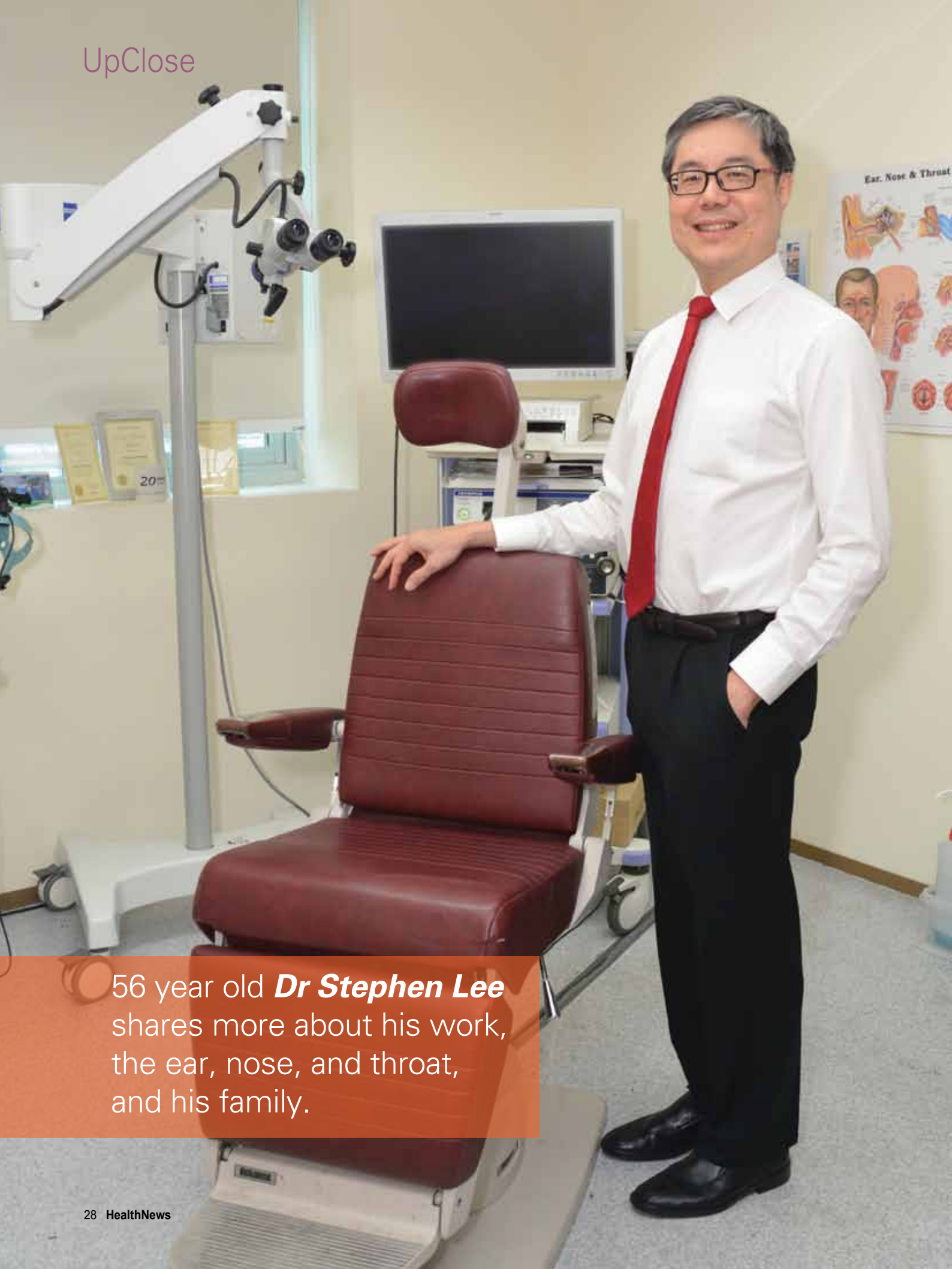
10 Your medicine

Some over-the-counter medication (such as allergy medications or decongestants) or prescription drugs (such as blood pressure medication or cough syrup) contain caffeine which can keep you from falling asleep.



WARNING!

It is dangerous to use "drowsy medicines" for purposes not medically intended and especially when prescribed for someone else.



56 year old ***Dr Stephen Lee*** shares more about his work, the ear, nose, and throat, and his family.

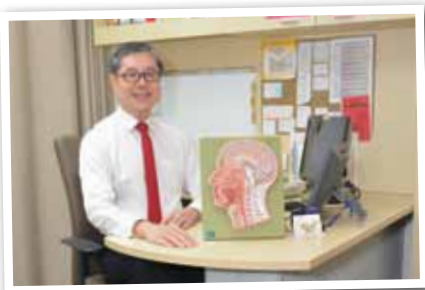
My day...

starts as early as 7.30am with surgery for children with recurrent throat, nose or ear infections or obstruction to breathing or hearing. They are given priority for early morning surgery as it is easier for them to fast, after which, I attend to inpatients.

If time permits, I have tea with my colleagues before starting my clinic. This is great for bonding and catching up on current news.

Clinics then continue with a short lunch break. My staff will arrange for the adult surgeries in the late afternoon.

Before I end my day, I again see my inpatients. If I happen to be on call for the week, I might have some emergency referrals at odd hours.



I chose to be an ENT specialist because...

ENT (Ear, Nose and Throat) deals with every part above the collar bones, except for the brain, eyes and teeth. It is a very interesting area, and allows me to use a combination of medical and surgical management options to treat my patients.

My sub-specialty interest arose in sinus and nasal conditions because it affects many individuals. And I realised early on in my training years that the advent of technology in the adoption of the endoscope and optical light fibre would pave the way for technologies that might change and improve treatment options.

In retrospect, this certainly happened! For example, who would have thought that you could use balloons to clear and ventilate obstructed sinuses!

I joined 20 years ago...

I enjoy coming to work at Raffles Hospital. There is good camaraderie with many colleagues, ranging from specialists of different disciplines to general practitioners, doctors and dentists, nursing and other non-medical staff. In short, it is a great place to work!

One thing everyone needs to know about the ENT is...

something I heard when I was a medical student. The first lecture by my ENT professor was the 'profound statement' that the ear is related to the nose and the nose to the throat and the throat to the ear. I recall the whole class was stunned to silence at the simple statement.

However, it is true and diseases in any area can and do affect the other areas. That's why, Ear, Nose and Throat together forms a specialty by itself!



The most memorable patient I've seen is...

a one year old child who gasped for air during sleep. His parents were frantic to the point of desperation. They had been unable to sleep well themselves for a month because they were terrified that their child would permanently stop breathing during sleep.

The problem was caused by extremely huge adenoids, i.e. tissue mass in the back of the nose. This was narrowing the airway by 95%. The problem was completely resolved by a surgery removing the adenoids. It was gratifying to see how relieved the parents were.

Dr Lee shares tips to better manage your health!

- Do not eat your dinner near your bedtime. Preferably, allow at least two or even three hours between your last bite and sleep. It helps to reduce reflux of stomach acids which often disturbs sleep and cause a variety of ENT issues.



- Maintain close to your recommended weight. To achieve that, manage your diet and exercise.

- If your nose is blocked, steaming or washing with saline may be helpful as initial steps.



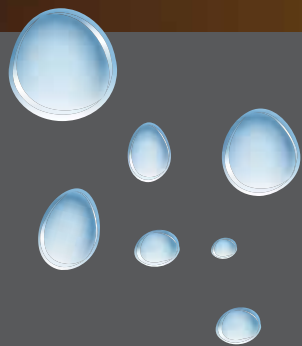
- Do not start thinking too hard about your work in the 15 or 30 minutes before you sleep.

Fun Facts about Dr Stephen Lee

- 1 In my childhood, I was a competitive swimmer at the international stage.
- 2 I think that one must find quiet time to be still and rest the mind. I often use these times to pray.
- 3 If I were not a doctor, I would likely be an actuary because I love mathematics and risk calculations.
- 4 I have a beautiful wife and three grown-up sons, ages 26, 23 and 19.

There is profound truth in the phrase: "I need my beauty sleep", which we so often hear or even say. But do you know how sleep deprivation affects our skin health? We ask Dr Tan Siew Kiang, Specialist in Dermatology & Consultant, Raffles Skin & Aesthetics, to tell us why we should get enough of it everyday if we want to look our best. *By Joanna Lee*

Beauty Benefits of Sleep



Rebalances Hydration

When we sleep, our skin recovers moisture as the body's hydration rebalances, while the excess water is generally processed for removal. Therefore, not getting enough rest can result in puffy eye bags.



Reduces Dark Eye Circles

Having enough rest can reduce dark eye circles. Poor blood circulation occurs when we lack sleep and this can get collected around the eye area. Although some people genetically have more melanin (brown pigment) around the eye area, lack of sleep can worsen this problem.

Combats Premature Ageing

Apart from applying sun screen, sleep is a natural way to combat ageing signs such as wrinkles and sagging. Our skin makes new collagen when we sleep. By not sleeping enough, our skin can appear dehydrated which naturally makes fine lines more visible, especially under the eye area since the skin is thin.



Glowing Complexion

Blood flow to the skin is boosted during our sleep. This is important if we want to wake up with a healthy glow without our complexion looking dull and dehydrated.

Tip

Regular exercise can improve blood circulation as it helps to deliver oxygen and nutrients to the skin.



Controls Stress Hormones

Lack of sleep increases stress hormones that can cause inflammation of the skin and worsen acne problems. In addition, stress increases the hormone cortisol which can lead to hair loss. This happens when a decreased blood flow fails to transport nutrients, vitamins and minerals to the hair follicles.



Works Better for Your Beauty Products

Your skin can better reap the benefits of the ingredients contained in your skin care products, since your skin repairs itself and blood circulation is more consistent when you are snoozing.






Tip

Don't drink too much water at night and before bedtime as it may affect your sleep. Instead drink up in the day to help your skin stay hydrated at night.



HOW MANY HOURS OF SLEEP DO I NEED?

AGE GROUPS RECOMMENDED HOURS OF SLEEP PER DAY

	Newborn 0 - 3 months	14 - 17
	Infant 4 - 11 months	12 - 15
	Toddler 1 - 2 years	11 - 14
	Pre-school 3 - 5 years	10 - 13
	School Age 6 - 13 years	9 - 11
	Teenager 14 - 17 years	8 - 10
	Adult 18 - 64 years	7 - 9
	Senior ≥ 65 years	7 - 8

Maximise your Sleep Benefits

Don't commit the cardinal sins that can ruin your beauty sleep. Try these tips to get a glow after sleep. **By Magdalene Lee**

Get enough sleep



In general, humans need an average of eight hours of sleep, with young children requiring more. When you sleep, your body restores and regenerates itself. According to Dr Rupert See, Family Physician, Raffles Medical at Shaw Centre, "there's no best time to sleep for body restoration, but research has shown that the early part of the night tends to have more non-REM sleep which is deeper and more restorative than REM sleep although both offer important benefits."

Wash up thoroughly



After washing your face, many people forget to moisturise leading to dry tired skin in the morning. Another common bad habit is sleeping with makeup on. No matter how tired you are, always remove your makeup before going to bed. Dr Rachael Teo, Specialist in Dermatology & Consultant, Raffles Skin & Aesthetics says: "Sleeping with makeup prevents your skin from renewing itself leading to breakdown of collagen, resulting in wrinkles and clogged pores."

Sleep on your back



This is the best position as it allows your body to maintain a neutral position. Adds Dr Teo: "sleeping on your front or side in the same position every night for years may cause sleep wrinkles to form on your face. Sleeping on the back allows for the least amount of pressure on the face, thus minimising wrinkles from forming." Silk or satin pillowcases cause less friction on your skin and hair and can prevent creases and wrinkles.



Wear your hair loose to sleep

It's always a good idea to keep your hair away from your face to prevent outbreaks. Dr Teo advises that you wear long hair in a loose ponytail as pulling the hair too tightly may lead to hair loss from traction.

Avoid salty foods and alcohol



Drink up but not too much. You may think drinking a glass or two may help you fall asleep, yet too much alcohol disrupts sleep patterns causing sleeplessness. According to Dr See, alcohol is diuretic which means you may wake up with a need to pee in the middle of the night. Alcohol and salty foods may cause dehydration leading to puffiness in the eye area.

Change your bedding often



Most people find it a hassle to wash bedsheets. Considering that you spend an average of eight hours in your bed daily, bedsheets collect dead skin, sweat, grease and dirt that may carry with it bacteria and attract bugs such as dust mites. Dr See recommends washing them weekly at 60 degrees Celsius, and sunning or running a hot iron over them to destroy bacteria.

Turn on the air-con and humidifier



Air-conditioning can help maintain the room temperature at a comfortable and consistent level for sleep. Dr See explains, "When sleeping, your body temperature drops which is why studies have shown that temperatures between 16 to 22 degrees Celsius are most ideal for sleep." Air-conditioning can dry the air, so consider either investing in a humidifier or leaving a small pail of water in the room.

Witness The Fitness

It's not that hard keeping up a healthy lifestyle. Personal trainer at Cut Gym during the day and street dance teacher by night, 26-year-old Lucas Lim shares some of his golden diet and exercise tips with us.

◀ FOR YOUR DIET ▶

1

Stop Ignoring the Obvious

"The main thing about dieting is to know what you are consuming and how it directly affects you. Take an honest look at your eating habits by using a food journal or tracking app with the aim of being more self-aware. This will eliminate unconscious snacking and promote consistency."

2

Be Patient

"Don't go overboard with crash diets. If your body is subjected to extreme calorie restriction, there will be an energy crisis where your body and metabolic rate suffer. Similarly, if you are looking to gain muscle fast, eating excess protein does not help. It will get turned into fat as our bodies can't store extra amino acids for later use."

3

There's Always a Choice

"There are many eateries providing healthier options now. There are many food delivery companies out there. You can buy groceries to cook your own food with, and at relatively cheap prices too."



◀ FOR YOUR WORKOUT ▶



Stick to what Works

"Go for exercises that give you the most pump or those which allow you to work the appropriate muscle groups well. Don't just go for the most trendy or fanciful exercises."



Train your Lagging Muscle Group

"If you are lagging in the shoulders, back and legs, it does not mean you go into every session hitting all three parts. Split your workouts into phases. Have four weeks of added back workouts if needed. After that cycle is complete, switch it up."



Foam Roll Post-Training

"Foam rolling will address the soft tissues that have been the most active during a given day's workout. It helps to limit Delayed Onset Muscle Soreness, speeds up recovery, and aids in lymphatic drainage, where waste products are carried away from the tissues back to the heart."

Read the full interview with Lucas in vol. 24 of iFitness or on www.ifitnessmag.com.

“Deskercise” Your Way to Better Sleep

Since most working adults find it hard to find time to exercise, Mr Lim Hun Teck, Chief Physiotherapist, Raffles Rehabilitation Centre, suggests four exercises you can do while you are at your desk. **By Noel Lee**



1 Desk Push-ups

Push ups is one of the best body weight exercises to train your back and chest. So what happens if you are unable to do a push-up? Stand slightly closer to the table, a slightly higher angle will make it easier to do a push-up.

How To?

Stand about 1m away from your desk, put your feet together and palms on the edge of your table about shoulder width apart. Lower your chest to the edge of the table and push back up. Don't forget to exhale on the way up. Do this 20 times.

Advantages

- Works out your arms, chest, and back, promoting muscle growth and increasing metabolism.
- You don't have to leave your desk at all! Just shift your chair aside and voila, you have a bench press station!



2 Chair Dips

Your office chair is good for more than sitting. With an adjustable height, it can become the perfect platform to work out those guns. Just remember to use a chair with no wheels to avoid embarrassing accidents while trying to work out.

How To?

Grab your chair and balance yourself, locking your elbows. When ready, lower your body by bending, pushing your torso forward. Stop when your elbows are about 90 degrees and lift yourself back up to the starting position.

Advantages

- Works out your arms, chest and shoulders to promote muscle growth and increase metabolism.
- With proper form, it can help you regulate your breathing reducing stress at work.
- Doesn't require much space.

Singaporeans have some of the longest working hours in the world. Knowing this, it is no surprise that Singapore has also become one of the world's most sleep-deprived cities. Getting good quality sleep is essential for physical health, says Dr Derek Li, General Practitioner, Raffles Medical. In addition, exercise, preferably in the morning or early evenings, can help improve the quality of sleep.



3 Chair Squats

Squatting is a compound exercise that trains your lower body and core. It might seem boring or mundane but it's the best way to tone that butt!

How To?

Stand in front of the chair. Lower yourself down until you touch the edge of the chair, pop back up the moment you touch the chair.

Advantages

- Works your legs and core muscles, promoting muscle growth and increasing metabolism.
- You don't have to leave your desk and it can be done where you are seated.



4 Leg Raises

Don't have much space to walk around? Is your office on the first floor? Well, you can always train your legs by doing some leg raises. Just sit up straight and lift up your legs and holding them straight in front of you, alternating between legs.

How To?

While sitting on your chair, straighten your leg in front of you and hold for 10 seconds. Lower slowly and hold just before your foot touches the floor. Repeat with other side.

Advantages

- Works your legs, thighs, glutes and butt.
- No one will even know you've been working out, provided your desk is big enough.



Finding the Perfect Sleeping POSTURE

If you often wake up in the morning with pain in the neck, shoulders or lower back, it is time to review at your sleeping posture. By Joanna Lee

There are essentially three sleep positions - back, front and side. Did you know that correcting a wrong sleeping posture can help you enjoy quality sleep, which affects our overall health? Since sleep is what we spend a third of our life doing, it is worth paying close attention to your sleep position.

Here is what Dr Ho Kok Yuen, Specialist in Anaesthesiology & Consultant, Raffles Pain Management Centre advises for sleeping positions, as well as ways to modify them for more restful sleep.

On Your Back



Pros

Sleeping on the back is the best position as the spine is in a neutral state.

Cons

This position is not ideal for snorers and those with sleep apnoea.

Modification

Use a memory foam pillow or feather pillow that can conform to the shape of the head and neck. Avoid using a pillow that is too stiff or thick.



On Your Side



Pros

This position helps to prevent snoring as this keeps the airways open. It is also the recommended position for pregnant women.

Cons

Your spine is arched and not in the neutral position.

Modification

The spine can be kept neutral by using a pillow that is more rounded and slightly higher under the neck than at the head.

Place a pillow or bolster between the knees to help keep the lower back neutral.



On Your Front



Cons

It is best to avoid sleeping facing down (on the front) as it arches the back, while the neck has to be turned to the side to rest on the pillow. This can lead to pain and stiffness of the neck and lower back in the morning.

Modification

If you cannot sleep any other way, place an extra pillow under your chest if you prefer to rest your head on a pillow. This will reduce the strain on your neck. Otherwise, go without a pillow under your head.

Place a pillow under the pelvis and hips to reduce back strain.



Select the Perfect Mattress and Pillow

By Dr David Choy, Specialist in Neurosurgery & Consultant, Raffles Neuroscience Centre

When selecting a mattress, look for comfort and support. Choose a mattress that is made of individually pocketed coils. Such mattresses provide better support to the spine because the individually pocketed coils will be able to support different parts of the body adequately; considering some parts of our body are heavier than others (e.g. shoulders and hips are heavier than the waist and chest).

When it comes to pillows, fluffy ones such as feather or down pillows are generally better. Foam type pillows may only be able to provide good support when they are new. However, foam loses its supportiveness as time passes. It is advisable that one tries to maintain a relatively straight neck posture when sleeping on the side.



Ask the Experts

Q: What are bedbug bites and how do we treat them?

A: The bites of the bedbug are painless and one is usually alerted to them only by the reaction that occurs later on (could be minutes to hours or even days later). The reaction consists of itchy red bumps known as papules or wheals. If the reaction is severe, large itchy wheals or even blisters may develop.

They commonly occur on the face, neck, arms and legs but may occasionally be generalised. These symptoms are caused by a reaction to the saliva of the bedbug which contains an anticoagulant (to prevent blood from clotting) and an anaesthetic. Treatment includes the use of various creams to reduce the itch. Cortisol is one such example.



Dr Chris Foo
Specialist in Dermatology & Consultant,
Raffles Skin & Aesthetics

Q: Can snoring be cured? When should someone see a doctor for the problem?

A: For people who are overweight, it would be helpful to reduce weight. It might not cure them, but at least they may have less of a problem.

You should see a doctor if you have extremely loud snoring, feel tired upon waking up in the morning, do not feel fresh after more than seven hours of sleep, doze off easily in the day time, feel sleepy in the day time, or have severe snoring with hypertension or heart disease.

Surgery would be advised if the patient has considered or tried continuous positive airway pressure treatment and feels that it is not suitable. If the cause is clearly a pure mechanical type obstruction for an instance due to big tonsils or adenoids, then surgery is the first choice of treatment.

Dr Stephen Lee
Specialist in ENT Surgery & Consultant,
Raffles ENT Centre



Q: How does insomnia impact our mental health?

A: While various mental conditions can cause insomnia, sleep problems may increase the risk for, and even directly contribute to, the development of some psychiatric disorders. It is estimated that 40% of all insomnia sufferers have a coexisting psychiatric condition.

Studies show that depressed patients who continue to experience insomnia are less likely to respond to treatment than those without sleep problems. Depressed patients who experience sleep disturbances are more likely to think about suicide and die by suicide than depressed patients who are able to sleep normally. It also affects our ability to reason, remember new things and impacts our judgment.



Dr Joshua Kua
Specialist in Psychiatry & Consultant,
Raffles Counselling Centre

Q: What are signs that we are not sleeping enough?

A: People who suffer from disturbed or disrupted sleep may find themselves lying awake for a long time in bed before falling asleep. When they do fall asleep they normally sleep for only a short period of time and they have difficulty getting quality deep sleep. They also find themselves awake most nights and tend to feel lethargic, as though they have not slept for the whole night. Some may wake up early in the morning and find it difficult to fall asleep again.



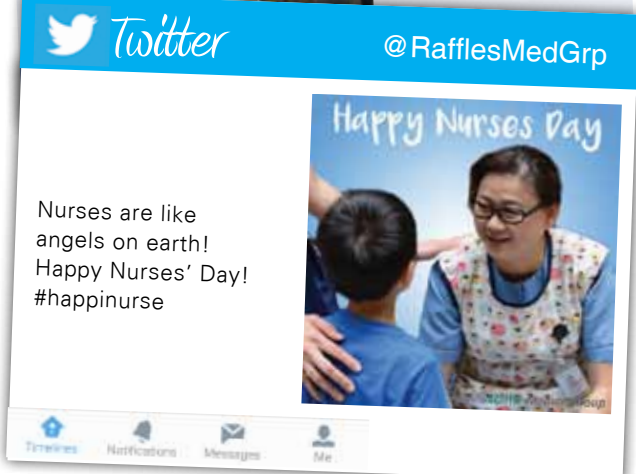
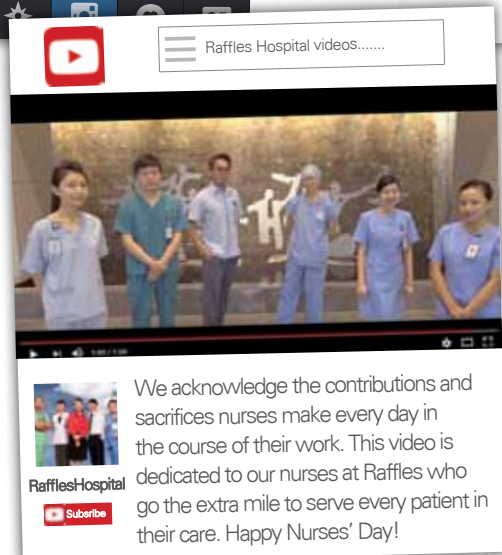
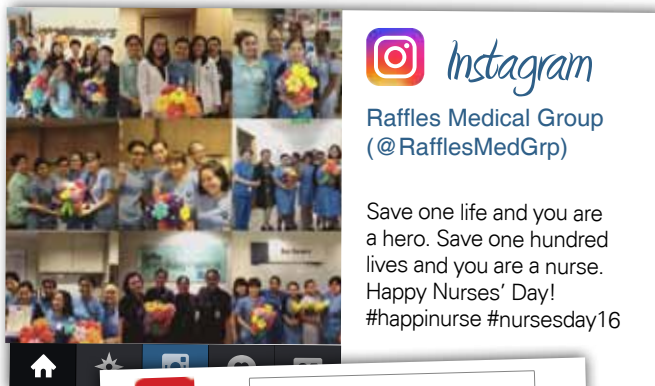
Symptoms of sleep disorders include generalised malaise and lethargy during the day, irritability, poor concentration memory, loss and headache to name just a few.

Dr Raymond Choy
General Practitioner, Raffles Medical
at Changi Airport Terminal 3

LET'S GET SOCIAL

Get the latest health news and tips, plus learn more about the people behind Raffles.

August 1 is Nurses' Day! To celebrate the efforts of nurses, we joined other healthcare organisations in the #happinurse campaign to showcase our nurses' work and dedication towards patients. Check out the highlights!



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