



Sound Sleep, Sound Mind *Sleep and Emotional Well-Being*

It is well-known that sleep problems can be a key sign of depression. What people may not realize is that the reverse is also true — sleep disorders can actually trigger depression and mood disorders. In fact, research shows that one of the first signs of sleep debt is irritability and increased depression.

Taking good care of yourself includes both your body and mind. Eliminating sleep-robbing habits and negative behaviors along with improving your sleep environment are the first steps to enhance your sleep experience and improve sleep quality overall health in the long-run.

Surprisingly, a recent Better Sleep Council survey shows that many Americans may be overlooking some of the most obvious solutions in their quest for better sleep and mental health.

- **51 percent** are not likely to alter their bedtime routine for a better night's sleep. Modifications could include eliminating televisions in bedrooms and not exercising or eating near bedtime.
- **52 percent** are not likely to eliminate negative behaviors that contribute to poor sleep. These include reducing caffeine, alcohol or nicotine intake.
- **66 percent** are not likely to evaluate their mattress for comfort and support and, if needed, consider buying a new one.

Sleep and Emotional Health

- People who received an average of six hours of sleep or less over the course of one week rated their general mood as worse (47 percent) than those who received seven to eight hours of sleep who are more likely to rate their general mood as excellent (54 percent).
- Two-thirds (68%) of Americans said that they would try to get more sleep when they need to improve their mood.
- More than half (56%) also reported that they would turn to comfort foods if they are feeling more moody, depressed, anxious and/or irritable than normal. Women were significantly more likely than men to do so (63% and 48% respectively).

Sleep Quality and Quantity; Making Sleep a Priority

- Two in five (41%) of Americans reported receiving an average of six hours or less of sleep per night. (7.5 to 8.5 is optimal)
- The majority of Americans rated the quality (57%) and quantity (56%) of their sleep as moderate or poor. Only 25 percent rated the quality and quantity of their sleep as a 10 (excellent). - *Based on a 10-point scale*
- More than half of Americans (56%) reported that they are willing to make sleep a priority if experiencing difficulty sleeping over a period of time.

For more information, visit www.bettersleep.org