Sleep Deprivation Meeting Kit



WHAT’S AT STAKE

Many workers are arriving on the job overly tired or sleep deprived. Sleep deprivation or fatigue can affect a worker’s manual dexterity, reaction time, and alertness. Worker fatigue or lack of sleep can affect judgment and safety.

WHAT’S THE DANGER

DANGERS OF SLEEP DEPRIVATION

An adult person should get 7 – 8 hours of sleep for a good health condition. Not getting the right amount of sleep can initiate various health problems, such as lack of concentration, drowsiness, fatigue, reduced ability to fight off infection, lack of physical strength, and reduced memory function. All these initial symptoms can eventually cause serious complications, such as insomnia, sleep apnea, narcolepsy, hallucination, mood swing, depression, and other mental illness. It can also increase the risk of heart attack, stroke, and asthma.

CAUSES OF SLEEP DEPRIVATION

- There are various causes of sleep deprivation, which can be voluntary behavior, personal obligations, working schedule, or medical problems. One of the important causes of chronic sleep deprivation is a conditioned emotional response. That is thinking too much about sleep problems or feeling anxious about not getting sleep on time.
- People sometimes undergo sleep deprivation because of voluntary choices. Instead of following a proper schedule for sleep, they prefer to read books, or watching television, or simply socialize.
- Certain illness, such as cold or tonsillitis, can cause snoring, gagging, and wakefulness, which altogether can disrupt a normal sleeping pattern. People with sleep disorders, such as sleep apnea or snoring and periodic limb movement disorder, can face difficulty getting enough sleep. In addition, certain health problems, such as asthma, or psychiatric conditions, such as depression and anxiety, can interfere with normal sleep-wake cycle.
- People who undergo sudden stressful situations in life, such as changing or losing a job, death of a close friend or family member, or moving to a new

place, sometimes face acute or short-term sleep deprivation.
- Young children and adolescents also frequently suffer from lack of sleep due to study-related commitments, such as exams and assignments.
- People older than 65 years frequently undergo sleep deprivation because of aging and age-related health complications. Because of lack of physical activity during daytime time, older people sometimes face a hard time falling asleep at night.

LACK OF SLEEP CREATES PHYSICAL/MENTAL HEALTH RISKS

Cardiovascular disease: Studies have found strong associations between sleep deficiency and cardiovascular problems including high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, heart attack, and stroke.

Diabetes: Insufficient sleep appears to affect the body's ability to regulate blood sugar, increasing the risk of metabolic conditions like diabetes.

Obesity: Research has found that people tend to consume more calories and carbohydrates when they don't get enough sleep, which is just one of several ways that poor sleep may be tied to obesity and problems maintaining a healthy weight.

Immunodeficiency: Sleep deficiency has been shown to lead to worsened immune function, including a poorer response to vaccines.

Hormonal abnormalities: Sleep helps the body properly produce and regulate levels of various hormones, potentially increasing susceptibility to hormonal problems in people with sleep deprivation.

Pain: Sleep-deprived people are at a higher risk of developing pain or feeling that their pain is getting worse. Pain may cause further sleep interruptions, creating a negative cycle of worsening pain and sleep.

Mental health disorders: Sleep and mental health are closely intertwined, and poor sleep has strong associations with conditions like depression, anxiety, and bipolar disorder.

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF

AVOID THE FOLLOWING TO PREVENT SLEEP DEPRIVATION

Electronic devices: TVs, cell phones, tablets, and computers can keep your mind stimulated, leaving you still wired when you want to go to bed. The light emitted by these devices can also interfere with your circadian rhythm. As a result, it's best to avoid using electronic devices for an hour or more before bed.

Alcohol: Drinking at night disrupts normal sleep cycle, and reduces overall sleep quality.

Caffeine: As a stimulant, caffeine makes you alert, and because it can stick around in your system for several hours, it's best to avoid it in the afternoon and evening.

Naps: To keep naps from interfering with sleep at night, keep them short (30

minutes or less) and never take them in the late afternoon or later. If you are struggling with insomnia, it’s best to avoid naps altogether.

RECOMMENDED SLEEP PREVENTION GUIDELINES

- limiting daytime naps (or avoiding them altogether).
- refraining from caffeine past noon or at least a few hours prior to bedtime.
- going to bed at the same time each night.
- waking up at the same time every morning.
- sticking to your bedtime schedule during weekends and holidays.
- spending an hour before bed doing relaxing activities, such as reading, meditating, or taking a bath.
- avoiding heavy meals within a few hours before bedtime.
- refraining from using electronic devices right before bed.
- exercising regularly, but not in the evening hours close to bedtime.
- reducing alcohol intake.

FINAL WORD

Worker fatigue due to inadequate rest can affect more than the individual involved. It can have catastrophic safety or financial effects on coworkers, families, businesses, and even, depending on the job, the general public. Workers need to get adequate sleep before going to work. They owe it to themselves and others.