

Health Bulletin

Important Health Information To Sleep On

(NAPSA)—By far, the most prevalent sleep problem for women is lack of sleep or sleep deprivation, which may prevent many women from performing and feeling their best.

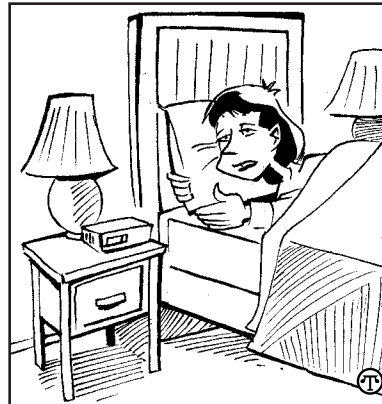
A 1998 study on women and sleep found that three out of 10 women—50 percent more than men—complain that lack of sleep affects their daily routine.

Most women get an average of six hours, 41 minutes, during the work week and seven hours, 16 minutes, on weekends.

Studies suggest that 17 hours of wakefulness, which is what most women routinely experience, is the equivalent of a blood alcohol level of .05 in terms of performance; 24 hours of wakefulness is the equivalent of being legally drunk.

“We have to make sleep a priority,” says Joyce Walsleben, Ph.D., director of the New York University School of Medicine’s Sleep Disorders Center and co-author of *A Woman’s Guide to Sleep: Guaranteed Solutions for a Good Night’s Rest* in the June issue of the *National Women’s Health Report*. “Once we do that, it’s amazing how we can find the time. But it’s a very hard cycle to break, thinking we’re so important that we can skip sleep.”

Daytime drowsiness and fatigue are the key signs that you’re not getting enough sleep, or that a sleeping disorder may be disturbing your sleep. Other signs



Sleeping only four to five hours a night for a month causes impairment parallel to walking around with a high blood alcohol level.

of sleep deprivation include falling asleep within five minutes of lying down (it should take about 15 minutes to fall asleep if you are not deprived); feeling drowsy whenever you get bored or feel warm or comfortable; or experiencing “microsleeps,” very brief episodes.

If you are feeling sleepy and find yourself “blinking out” for short periods, even a few seconds, you may be experiencing microsleeps, which can be dangerous if you’re driving or doing other tasks that require alertness.

For more information on sleep and health, visit www.healthywomen.org or call 1-877-986-9472 for the National Women’s Health Report.