It’s Better Sleep Month!

Sleep is a necessity, and it affects every aspect of life — from productivity to health to mood. We might think that sleep hours cut into our productive hours, but we’re more productive with sufficient sleep! Productivity increases when we have more energy. We also think more clearly and work more efficiently.

Consequences of insufficient sleep that we feel:
- Irritability
- Exhaustion
- Easily distracted
- Making unsound decisions

Others aren’t always as obvious. Did you know sleep deprivation negatively affects our immune system? Research also suggests that sleep deprivation may lead to:
- Weight gain
- High blood pressure
- Cancer
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Diabetes
- Bone loss
- Depression

And can impair:
- Learning
- Memory
- Alertness
- Concentration
- Judgment
- Problem solving
- Reasoning

According to Eve Van Cauter of the University of Chicago, a “lack of sleep disrupts every physiologic function in the body.” It also hinders our ability to realize our own performance, making us think we’re functioning well when we probably aren’t. It’s up to each of us to make sure we get enough rest. In the end, getting better sleep helps us lead a better life.

Adapted from: www.BetterSleep.org
May is Strawberry Month, Asparagus Month, AND Salad Month. Let’s combine all three in this refreshing spring side!

**Strawberry Asparagus Salad**

Source: [www.food.com](http://www.food.com)

**Prep:** 20 minutes  
**Makes:** 4 servings

**Ingredients:**
- 2 c. chopped asparagus, cut in pieces and blanched  
- 2 c. strawberries, sliced

**Dressing:**
- ¼ c. lemon juice  
- 2 Tbs. vegetable oil  
- 2 Tbs. honey  
- Salt and pepper to taste.

**Directions:**
1. Toss asparagus and strawberries together in a bowl.  
2. Combine the dressing ingredients and mix well.  
3. Pour dressing over salad and toss.  
4. Chill before serving.

*Garnish with fresh mint or basil.*

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**Sleep Myths**

**Catch up on sleep on the weekend.** You can never completely make up for sleep you’ve lost or bank sleep for the future, so it’s best to plan for 7 to 8 hours each night.

**You need less sleep with age.** You may wake up more, but you still need the same total hours of sleep with age.

**Alcohol helps you sleep.** Alcohol does make you sleepy, but it is metabolized throughout the night and is likely to disturb your sleep, especially deep sleep.

**You can get a new mattress but keep the old box spring.** You should always replace both since they are designed to work best together as a set, and the warranty may not apply if you do not.

**Count sheep, t for shut-eye.** An Oxford University study showed doing this actually lengthens how long it takes to sleep. Instead, listen to soothing music or read a book to help you fall asleep.

**Buy a firm mattress for back pain.** The fact is that mattress choice is a very personal thing. Try out a variety of mattresses to find the one for you.

**Cheese causes nightmares.** There is no evidence to support this idea. In general though, it’s a good idea to finish meals or snacks two to three hours before you go to bed to sleep well.

**Warm milk makes you sleepy.** While there’s no evidence to support this story, you might find it comforting if it was something that was always given to you as a child.

Adapted from: [www.BetterSleep.org](http://www.BetterSleep.org)
Check out www.BetterSleep.org for more fun facts and resources on your best night’s sleep!