Sleep Fact Sheet

Sleep is vital for a person's overall health and wellbeing, yet the majority of people fail to get enough sleep on a regular basis and many suffer from sleep deprivation. In general, the average adult needs 8 hours of sleep a night, failing to meet your body's sleep needs can lead to daytime sleepiness that can interfere with daily activities and lead to other health problems.

Why we need sleep:
- Drowsiness causes accidents
  - Drowsiness can slow reaction time as much as drunk driving. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration estimates that sleepiness plays a role in 100,000 auto crashes and 1,550 crash-related deaths a year in the U.S.
- Lack of sleep can lead to weight gain
  - Failing to get enough sleep has been linked to weight gain through changes in hormone levels that increase hunger and appetite.
- Losing sleep effects your memory and learning
  - Through a process called memory consolidation, sleep helps our brains remember new information.
- We look older if we don't get enough sleep
  - Chronic sleep loss can lead to dull skin, enhance fine lines and worsen dark circles under the eyes.
- Sleep deprivation impairs judgment
  - Not getting enough sleep can have an impact on how we interpret situations. Sleep loss affects our ability to make judgments because we may not accurately evaluate an event.
- Sleep loss can lead to health problems
  - Chronic sleep loss can put you at risk for serious health conditions like:
    - Heart disease, heart attack, heart failure, high blood pressure, stroke and diabetes

6 Tips for a Sounder Slumber
1. Stick to a sleep/wake schedule
2. Careful with caffeine, nicotine and alcohol before bedtime – try to refrain from consuming any of these in the hours before you go to bed
3. Watch what you eat – try to avoid going to bed too hungry or too full, as the discomfort can affect your ability to get to sleep
4. Start a bedtime routine – Relaxing activities like a warm bath or reading a book, can help you to transition from being awake to drowsiness, promoting better sleep
5. Assess your sleep environment – turn off the electronics, and make sure the room is dark, quiet and comfortable
6. Get some exercise – regular physical activity can help you sleep better, but make sure to complete your workouts at least 3 hours before bed time

Fun Sleep Fact:
On average a cat sleeps 12 hours a day, your pet dog will sleep 10.5 hours a day and for those who may have a giraffe around they only sleep 2 hours a day.