Why a Good Night’s Sleep Matters

Remember the last time you woke up refreshed and alert? That feeling is one way you can see the impact sleep has on your health and your quality of life.

But not getting enough sleep does not just make you more tired and cranky. It can also have a negative impact on your health.

For sleep to do its job right, both the amount and quality you get are vital, says the National Sleep Foundation. The number of hours you need varies by age. Teens, for example, need at least 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep to refresh their bodies and minds.

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Why a Good Night’s Sleep Matters

Why Do You Need the Right Amount of Sleep?

What happens if sleep is cut short? The body needs sleep to perform many important functions. For example, while you are sleeping, your body fixes muscles, consolidates memory and regulates the hormones that control growth and hunger.

If you do not get enough sleep, your body does not have time to do those things properly. That is why someone who does not get enough sleep may struggle to think clearly and make good choices.

Research also shows that not getting enough sleep can raise your risk for serious health problems, including heart disease, high blood pressure and cancer. That same lack of sleep also plays a role in how well you recover from those and other health problems.

Sleep is also important to good mental health. It is a factor in how well we deal with issues like stress, depression and seasonal affective disorder. Sleep disruptions are both symptoms and contributing factors for those issues.

What is Keeping You Up at Night?

Roughly 3 out of 5 Americans say something keeps them awake at night. Their search for a fix leads them to spend up to $24 billion each year on products like sleeping pills, special pillows, mattresses and white noise machines.

These are some of the tips experts offer to help you get the shut-eye you need:
- Plan on seven to nine uninterrupted hours of sleep.
- Go to bed and wake up at about the same time each day.
- Keep your bedroom dark and cool.
- Exercise. But work out during the day, not at bedtime.
- Avoid caffeine.

Your favorite gadget may also be to blame. Using digital tools such as mobile phones, e-readers, tablets, laptops and other devices before you go to bed could affect the quality and quantity of your sleep.

Why does this happen? A study published by the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences found that devices that give off light may shift the body’s circadian rhythms and the production of melatonin, a hormone that regulates sleep. That is why you should avoid light-emitting devices for at least an hour before bedtime. Consider reading a printed book or a newspaper instead.

What About Melatonin?

Melatonin is a hormone your body releases during the early evening and the first hours of your sleep period. Some people find a melatonin supplement makes them sleepy, but there are some concerns about its long-term use. You should discuss this and other sleep issues with your doctor.

Find Out More

If you are regularly struggling to get more sleep, it may be time to talk to your doctor about it. There may be a cause for it that needs to be treated.

Many people suffer from sleep apnea, a condition where breathing briefly stops during sleep. Caused by a blocking of the airway, these pauses may occur several times each hour, and they prevent enough air from reaching the lungs.

Others suffer from insomnia, a common sleep health problem that can have many different causes. Talk to your doctor if you have insomnia for more than a few weeks.

Get the help you need.

Getting enough sleep is one of the best things you can do for your health. If you continue to have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep throughout the night, talk to your doctor. You may have a treatable sleep disorder or a health issue that is causing sleep problems.

Sources: National Institutes of Health; National Sleep Foundation; Harvard Medical School; Mayo Clinic; Gallup Poll; Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences
The Blue Door Neighborhood Center℠ is Open!

Enter Here for a Healthier Future.

The Blue Door Neighborhood Center is excited to be your new neighbor at the 11th Street Gateway Retail Center in Chicago’s historic Pullman neighborhood. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois has been hard at work, meeting with community leaders, churches and other groups to learn how we can best support a thriving, healthy community.

The Blue Door Neighborhood Center offers classes and workshops to the community at no cost. The center will be a space to learn and focus on your health. Here are some of the services we offer:

- Classes on healthy meal planning, exercising and relaxation techniques
- Workshops on handling health conditions, like heart disease and asthma
- Resources for understanding and using health insurance
- Tips for connecting to community services that offer food and transportation

“We are thrilled to be adding to the positive energy in Pullman and nearby communities. It is such an honor to serve this neighborhood by giving access to health education classes and information about social services that help residents live healthier,” said Laron Taylor, director of the Blue Door Neighborhood Center.

Stop by the center to learn more about the services we offer and let us know how we can help support you!

Address
756 E. 111th St.
Suites 102 & 103
Chicago, IL 60628

Hours
Monday-Friday: 7:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m.
Saturday: 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.
Sunday: Closed
Preventive Screenings Help Fight Cancer

Research shows that early screenings can help reduce the number of new cancer cases. For example, screenings may prevent cervical or colorectal cancers by finding precancerous lesions. These lesions can be treated before becoming cancerous.

Early detection is key. Preventive cancer screenings may include:

- **A physical exam and history:** Doctors look at the body to check general health and to look for anything unusual, such as lumps. As part of the exam, the doctor will ask about health habits, past illnesses and treatments.

- **Lab tests:** Screenings may involve taking samples of tissue, blood, urine or other substances.

- **Imaging:** The doctor may want to take images, such as a mammogram for breast cancer.

- **Genetic tests:** Since some cancers are inherited, a doctor may test for gene mutations (changes) linked to some forms of cancer.

Some examples of important cancer screenings include:

- **Breast cancer:** Getting mammograms regularly can lower the chance of dying from breast cancer.

- **Colorectal cancer:** Cancer of the colon and rectum is the second-leading cancer killer in the United States. Everyone age 50 and older should get a screening.

- **Prostate cancer:** Most prostate cancers grow slowly. Screening can help find it before you have symptoms.

How often you should be screened and what kind of preventive care screenings you need depend on your age, gender, health and family history.

Schedule an appointment with your doctor to discuss any issues you may have. Do not leave your health to luck. Make a pledge to take action today.

Sources: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
Memory Loss: Is It Alzheimer’s or Aging?

Does this sound familiar? You meet someone at a party, only to forget the person’s name within minutes. You laugh it off and ask his or her name again.

But sometimes, especially if you are older, you may wonder if your forgetfulness is really an early sign of Alzheimer’s disease.

Alzheimer’s is a brain disease that causes a slow decline in memory, thinking and reasoning skills. It affects 1 in 10 Americans age 65 and older, according to the Alzheimer’s Association. That number is expected to increase as the number of Americans age 65 and older reaches about 88 million by 2050.

Alzheimer’s ranges from the mildest stage, when it just starts to affect a person’s mind, to the most severe stage, when the person cannot do basic tasks. There is no cure, but doctors can slow the disease’s progression if it is caught early.

So how can you tell if you or a loved one may have Alzheimer’s? The Alzheimer’s Association has a list of 10 early signs and symptoms of Alzheimer’s compared with typical age-related behavior.

Here are a few signs of the disease and normal age-related changes.

**Memory loss disrupts daily life.** One of the most common signs of Alzheimer’s is memory loss, especially forgetting recently learned information. Other signs include forgetting important dates or events, asking again and again for the same information, and needing to rely often on notes or family members for information.

**Typical age-related change:** Forgetting names or appointments occasionally but remembering them later.

**Difficulty completing familiar tasks.** People with Alzheimer’s may have trouble doing something they have done many times before. Examples include not knowing how to drive to a familiar location, manage a budget at work or remember the rules of a favorite game.

**Typical age-related change:** Occasionally needing help with technology, such as recording a TV show.

**Confusion with time or place.** Alzheimer’s patients can lose track of dates, seasons and time. They may have trouble understanding something that is not happening now or forget where they are and how they got there.

**Typical age-related change:** Mixing up the days of the week but realizing it later.

**Difficulty with words when speaking or writing.** People with Alzheimer’s struggle in conversation. They may stop and have no idea how to continue. They may repeat themselves. They may be unable to find the right word or call things by the wrong name.

**Typical age-related change:** Sometimes having trouble finding the right word.

**Take action early.**

If you notice any of these warning signs of Alzheimer’s, be sure to contact your doctor immediately. If you notice them in someone else, encourage that person to speak with a doctor as soon as possible. Early treatment can help preserve daily functioning longer. It can also give you an opportunity to explore treatment options and plan for long-term care.

Contact your doctor right away if you notice memory or thinking problems. Be sure to continue taking your medication as directed until your doctor tells you otherwise.

Sources: Alzheimer’s Association; National Institute on Aging; Helpguide.org, Harvard Health Publications
Know Your Rights and Responsibilities

As a member of Blue Cross Community MMAI®, you have the following rights and responsibilities without having your treatment adversely affected:

MEMBER RIGHTS

1. Know your rights.
   - a. You have the right to receive information about your rights and responsibilities.
   - b. You have the right to make recommendations about these rights and responsibilities.

2. You have the right to respect, dignity, and privacy. That includes the right to:
   - a. Nondiscrimination
   - b. Know that your medical records and discussions with your providers will be kept private and confidential
   - c. Ask for and receive your medical records, and if needed, have them corrected

3. You have the right to a fair opportunity to choose a health care plan and primary care provider (PCP), the doctor or health care provider you will see most of the time. You also have the right to change your plan or your provider without penalty at any time.
   That includes the right to:
   - a. Be told how to choose a health plan and primary care provider available in your area
   - b. Be told how to change your health plan or your primary care provider

4. You have the right to ask questions and get answers about anything you do not understand. That includes the right to:
   - a. Have your provider explain your health care needs to you and talk to you about the different ways your health care problems can be treated
   - b. Be told why care or services were denied and not given

5. You have the right to agree to or refuse treatment and have a say in treatment decisions. That includes the right to:
   - a. Work as part of a team with your provider in deciding what health care is best for you
   - b. Say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to the care recommended by your provider

6. You have the right to use each complaint and appeal process available through the Managed Care Organization and through Medicaid. That includes the right to:
   - a. Make a complaint to your health plan or to the state Medicaid program about your health care, your provider or your health plan
   - b. Get a timely answer to your complaint
   - c. Use the Plan’s appeal process and be informed on how to file a complaint
   - d. Ask for a fair hearing from the state Medicaid program and get information about how that process works

7. You have the right to quick and easy access to care. That includes the right to:
   - a. Have telephone access to a medical professional 24 hours a day/seven (7) days a week for any emergency or urgent care you need
   - b. Receive medical care in a timely manner
   - c. Get in and out of a health care provider’s office easily. There should not be any conditions that limit movement for people with disabilities according to the Americans with Disabilities Act
   - d. Have interpreters, if needed, when getting covered services during appointments with your providers and when talking to your health plan. Interpreters are people who can speak your native language, help someone with a disability, or help you understand the information
   - e. Be given information you can understand about your health plan rules, the services you can get and how to get them

8. You have the right to refuse to be restrained or secluded for someone else’s convenience or as a way of forcing you to do something you do not want to do, or as punishment.

9. You have a right to know that your health plan cannot prevent doctors, hospitals and others who care for you from advising you about your health status, medical care and treatment, even if the care or treatment is not a covered service.

10. You have the right to know that you are not responsible for paying for covered services.

11. You have the right to make recommendations about the plan’s rights and responsibilities policy
**MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Read and follow the Member Handbook.

2. Keep your scheduled appointments or call your provider to reschedule or cancel at least 24 hours before your appointment.

3. Show your Blue Cross Community MMAI ID card to each provider before getting covered services.

4. Call your PCP or 24/7 Nurseline before going to an emergency room, except in situations that you believe are life threatening or that could permanently damage your health.

5. Call Member Services if you change your phone number or your address. You should also contact your Case Worker at Department of Human Services (DHS).

6. Share information about your health with your primary care provider and learn about service and treatment options. That includes the responsibility to:
   a. Tell your primary care provider about your health
   b. Talk to your providers about your health care needs and ask questions about the different ways your health problems can be treated
   c. Help your providers get your medical records
   d. Treat your providers and other health care employees with respect and courtesy

7. Be involved in service and treatment option decisions. Make personal choices to keep yourself healthy. That includes the responsibility to:
   a. Work as a team with your provider in deciding what health care is best for you
   b. Understand how the things you do can affect your health
   c. Do the best you can to stay healthy
   d. Treat providers and staff with respect
   e. Talk to your provider about your medications. If you think you have been treated unfairly or discriminated against, call the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) toll-free at **1-800-368-1019**. You can also view information concerning the HHS Office for Civil Rights online at [www.hhs.gov/ocr](http://www.hhs.gov/ocr).

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**Member and Community Events**

Check out what is happening near you. You can find Blue Cross Community MMAI member and community events on our website: www.bcbsil.com/mmai/. Or you can call us toll free at **1-877-723-7702**, (TTY/TDD: **711**).
### LifeTimes
**Your guide to health, wellness, and fitness**

**Important Blue Cross Community MMAI phone numbers (Please have your member ID number ready)**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Member Services</th>
<th>Toll-free Number</th>
<th>TTY/TDD</th>
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<tr>
<td>If you have any questions, please call Member Services.</td>
<td>1-877-723-7702</td>
<td>711</td>
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**24/7 Nurseline**

| 24/7 Nurseline | 1-888-343-2697 | 711 |

*LifeTimes* is published four times a year for Blue Cross Community MMAI members. It brings you news about your health plan and staying healthy. Each issue has important phone numbers for you to cut out and keep. If you have questions or need help, call Member Services.

Articles in *LifeTimes* are meant to educate. They are not meant as medical advice. Please check with your doctor for any advice about your health.

For questions about enrolling call: Illinois Client Enrollment Services at 1-877-912-8880, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. TTY users should call 1-866-565-8576. The call and help are free. Website: enrollhfs.illinois.gov

If you have questions, please call Blue Cross Community MMAI Member Services at 1-877-723-7702. We are available seven (7) days a week. Our call center is open Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Central time. On weekends and Federal holidays, voice messaging is available. If you leave a voice message, a Member Services representative will return your call no later than the next business day. The call is free.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex.

ATTENTION: If you speak English, language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-877-723-7702 (TTY/TDD: 711).

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-877-723-7702 (TTY/TDD: 711).


Blue Cross Community MMAI (Medicare-Medicaid Plan) is provided by Health Care Service Corporation, a Mutual Legal Reserve Company (HCSC), an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. HCSC is a health plan that contracts with both Medicare and Illinois Medicaid to provide benefits of both programs to enrollees. Enrollment in HCSC’s plan depends on contract renewal.