



National Indian Health Board NATIONAL TRIBAL COVID-19 RESPONSE

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5/8/2020

Sleep Disruption and COVID-19

Sleep Disruption Definition: Not enough sleep to support staying awake, performing your responsibilities, or health because of less total sleep time or often interrupted sleep; those experiencing sleep disruption often worry about sleep.

Why am I Experiencing Sleep Disruption?

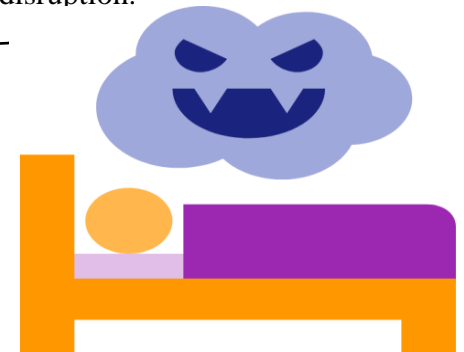
- Disruption of daily life (new schedule or lack of schedule, less natural light, oversleeping, isolation, etc.)
- More anxiety and worry, especially about yourself or your family
- Too much screen time
- Depression and isolation

Negative Effects of Sleep Disruption

- Worsens the immune system making you more likely to get sick
- Difficulty managing your moods, brain function, and less productivity during the day
- Decreases overall mental health
- May increase the effects of stress on the body

Dreams and Nightmares

Due to COVID-19 pandemic, nightmares and vivid dreams are common. They can leak into the daytime, affecting your mood and stress levels, as well as causing you to wake up during the night, leading to sleep disruption.



How can I improve my sleep during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Here are some recommendations to help improve quality of sleep:



- **Create a sleep schedule.** Not everyone needs the same amount of sleep at night. Test out different amounts and then prioritize the amount that works best for you, setting a “bedtime”. Set up a “wake up time”, a “wind down time”, and a “sleep time”.
- **Limit screen time at night.** Turn off devices one hour before bedtime, and try to keep your phone charging in a separate room so you are less tempted to look at it during the night.

- **Be careful with naps.** Keep naps to 30 minutes or less, and before 2 p.m. If you continue to have trouble falling asleep, try to avoid naps.
- **Improve your sleep space.** Make sure your bedroom space is good for sleep. Try an eye mask or darkening shades, and keep the temperature cool. If possible, try not to do work in bed or in the bedroom. Keep your bedroom for sleep or relaxing time only.
- **Keep to a daytime schedule and routine.** Commit to daily activities like exercise, meals, socializing (virtually), etc. at certain times to build structure to your days. This helps with a regular bedtime and wakeup time. Try setting reminders or alarms on your phone, especially for turning off screens an hour before bedtime.
- **Take walks outside.** Natural light is important for telling your body when to be awake and when to go to sleep. If your home has low amounts of natural light, your body's natural rhythm may be off. Take walks outside or spend time outside to combat this.



https://www.hopkinsguides.com/hopkins/view/Johns_Hopkins_Psychiatry_Guide/787390/all/Managing_Sleep_Problems_during_COVID_19

<https://www.uchicagomedicine.org/forefront/coronavirus-disease-covid-19/advice-for-sleeping-well-during-the-covid-19-outbreak>

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/do-dreams-affect-how-well-you-sleep>

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-guidelines-covid-19-isolation>

Disclaimer:

This fact sheet is supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$2,000,000 with 100 percent funded by CDC/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement, by CDC/HHS, or the U.S. Government.