Sleep

Why it Matters

- How and when we sleep is controlled by hormones released in a 24-hour cycle based on outside cues, like sunlight. Patterns of meals, exercise and social interactions contribute to the sleep/wake cycle and changes in these cues can disrupt sleep.
- With too little sleep, the body accumulates a “sleep debt.” Eventually this debt must be paid, even if it means falling asleep at a bad time.
- Adequate sleep:
  - Improves memory
  - Regulates mood
  - Strengthens immunity and helps to heal the body
  - Sharpens focus, motivation, and your ability to pay attention.

What MSU students say and do

- **46%** Of MSU students reported experiencing sleep difficulties, and 18% reported it as an impediment to their academic performance.
- **5%** Of MSU students reported that they had been diagnosed with insomnia or some other sleep disorder.

When to Get Help

See a health care provider if:

- **Sleep problems interfere** with school, work, or relationships with friends or family.
- **You use sleeping pills to make yourself sleep** or amphetamines to keep you alert.
- **You have depression, chronic anxiety, pain, or a change in medication.** A provider can give you information and help with these possible causes of sleep problems.
- **You snore heavily or stop breathing at intervals during the night** (often starting again with a gasp). You may have sleep apnea, which results from a blocked or partly blocked airway.

What you can do

- **Try to get at least 7 to 9 hours of sleep daily.**
- **Exercise regularly and do things that help you to relax.**
- **Ditch your cell phone at bedtime - it will lead to a more restful sleep.**
- **Avoid substances that disrupt sleep - especially closer to bedtime.**

- **25%** Of MSU students reported that sleep difficulties were traumatic/very difficult to handle in the past year.
- **63%** Of MSU students reported getting enough sleep that they felt rested in the morning most days of the week.

Sleep Resources

- **MSU Counseling Center:** Short-term individual counseling, group counseling, substance abuse assessment/services, and prevention education. counseling.msu.edu
- **Student Health Services:** A wide variety of health care services are available to MSU students year round at 5 different locations on campus. olin.msu.edu
- **Recreational Sports and Fitness Services:** Fitness classes, club and intramural sports, several locations on campus. recsports.msu.edu
- **Health Promotion Department:** A wide array of campus and classroom educational programs, health promotion campaigns, individualized educational programs, and other health promotion strategies. olin.msu.edu/healthpromo

The data in this document were obtained from the 2016 National College Health Assessment (NCHA) through Student Health Services at MSU Health Center’s membership in the American College Health Association (ACHA).