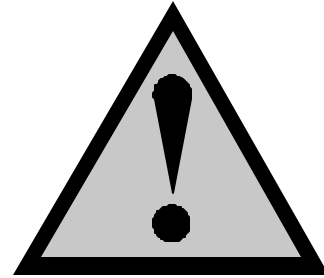


In Good Hands

A Free Monthly Newsletter For The Friends and Patients of: Dr. Darrell C. Swolensky, D.C.

“If I am to talk about peace, I should at least have something of it in my soul.” ~Roger L. Plunk~

**WARNING: The Natural Process
That We All Need But Most Of Us
Do Not Get Enough Of...
Are You Or Your Family At Risk?**



Henderson --What's this missing link to so many problems? A lack of sleep! According to research released in 2002 by the Washington, D.C.-based National Sleep Foundation, the average American is also the average sleep-deprived American. About 2/3 of about 1,000 respondents reported having trouble sleeping several times a week.

A lack of it leads to car crashes, injuries in the home and at work, and to other forms of distress. Studies show that if you don't have enough of it, you're at risk for mood disorders such as depression, and a lack may even lead to overeating and obesity.

“Some of the problems we face as a society--- from road rage to obesity---may be linked to lack of sleep and poor sleep”, says Richard L. Gelula, executive director of the National Sleep Foundation.

Here's a frightening statistic: more than half (51 percent) of the respondents to the National Sleep Foundation poll said they'd driven a motor vehicle while drowsy, and 17 percent admitted to *dozing off* while driving.

It's not surprising that a lack of sleep can be dangerous or even fatal. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has reported that drowsy driving causes at least 100,000 car crashes, 40,000 injuries, and 1,550 deaths each year.

Yet sleep deprivation is often voluntary. Many people would rather work late, watch television, or do

just about anything else than obtain what they need in sleep time: 7-8 hours of sleep each night. (More than 8 hours is unnecessary for most people.)

Sleep allows your body both to relax and replenish itself. For example, studies show that growth hormones secreted during sleep help repair damaged tissue.

For most people, puffy baggy eyes, a droopy face, and an overall draggy demeanor is what they see when they look in the mirror after a hard night of no sleep or insufficient sleep. In contrast, a good night's sleep, especially when you sleep well night after night, is far more likely to leave you with clearer skin, more sparkling eyes, and an improved attitude to life.

Sleep problems may be caused by stress or medical problems, by medications or by personal habits that can be changed. Some people suffer from *sleep apnea*, a disorder in which the individual stops breathing for brief periods during sleep. Heavy snoring can be a sign of sleep apnea. This problem should be treated because it can become dangerous.

Alcohol may cause insomnia or frequent awakenings, and to improve your sleep time and quality, you should eliminate or at least cut back your alcohol consumption.

Experts at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism report that drinking alcoholic beverages may make you fall asleep. But then they'll often cause you to wake up in the middle of the night, dehydrated, headachy, and with a bad case of insomnia.

Caffeine is another sleep robber, because it's a stimulant that prevents you from falling asleep with ease. According to the National Institute of Health, caffeine remains in the body 3 to 7 hours after consumption! Heeding this information, avoid foods and drinks with caffeine, as well as chocolate (which also has caffeine in it) at least 3 hours before you want to go to sleep.

Sometimes medications can induce insomnia as a side effect. Ask your doctor if your medicines could be keeping you awake. If so, your physician may be able to change the medication or reduce the dosage. Or maybe you really don't need the drug anymore.

If that doesn't do the trick, a chiropractic adjustment may be just what's needed to help you regain your normal sleep patterns.

What if you can't sleep, despite following the above advice? Consider making lifestyle changes that have worked for others to get their nightly night-night, without having to resort to taking prescribed drugs that can be habit-forming.

First, analyze your bedtime habits. Are you going to bed at midnight and expecting to fall asleep instantly? This is less likely to happen if you've been having an animated discussion with family or friends or watching an exciting movie on TV. Delay the debate and tape the movie and watch it another day. Turn in earlier, say around 10:00 p.m. or so.

Also don't eat fashionably late. If you dine at 9:00, and then expect to fall asleep at 10:00, think again! You've given your digestive system plenty to work on. Better to eat earlier, so your body can wind down at night.

Now, if you smoke (and if so, *why* are you still engaging in this very unhealthy habit?), keep in mind nicotine is a stimulant that makes it hard to fall asleep and stay asleep. If you don't quit smoking altogether, at least avoid smoking for several hours before bedtime.

Ask yourself what's going on with your life now. Are you stressed out, as many people with insomnia are? If so, it's time to bring down stress levels. One way is through slow, deep breathing, which may sound boring, and often is! It's so boring that it can make you fall asleep--which is the point in the first place.

Another strategy to achieve shuteye is mastering simple relaxation therapy techniques. Lie down, close

your eyes, and imagine different muscle groups relaxing. You can start with your feet and work your way up to your head, in your mind. Or start with your head and work down to the toes.

Often gentle exercising is an inducement to sleep. Experts report walking is a great cardiovascular exercise that can also relax the body so that it's ready to fall into a nice deep sleep when it's time. Take a brief walk a few hours before you'd like to sleep.

It's important to use your bedroom for sleeping and intimacy only. Avoid using it as an office away from the office or another place to watch television. If you're facing sleepless nights, purge your bedroom of work and entertainment paraphernalia.

Transform your bedroom into a sleep-inducing site. Do you have a comfortable mattress, clean soft sheets, and is the thermostat set at a moderate temperature? If not, then go ahead and make the needed changes. You may find that they help lull you into dreamland.

Finally, please remember, if you ever have any questions or concerns about your health, talk to us. Contact us with your, "*Here's what I was wondering about*", type questions, instead of "*Guess what I just did*", statements. We're here to help, and don't enjoy

Welcome New Patients!

Here are the new patients that became members of our practice family this last month! We'd like to welcome you publicly, and wish you all the best!

Bob W.

Winifred K. (referral from the flyer)

Charles K. (referral from the flyer)

Paulette S. (referral from Joe S.)

Geoffrey C.

Phil W.

Helen S. (referral from Diane O.)

Becca M. (referral from Emily R.)

Willy S. (referral from Diane O.)

Dan N. (referral from Kitty N.)

Bruce M. (referral from Becca M.)

Maddie W. (referral from Bob W.)

Charles G.

Tom M. (referral from the flyer)

Alexia D. (referral from Heather D.)

Michelle V. (referral from Emily R.)

Jackie D.

anything more than participating in your lifelong good health!

Success Story Of The Month –

(Names Have Been Changed To Protect Privacy)

“He who seeks, finds, if he does not lose heart...” ~Alfred Thayer Mahan~

Myofascial Pain Syndrome: A Real Problem With A Real Solution

When Laurie first came to chiropractic she was very upset, fed up and feeling like nobody could help her, and that chiropractic probably couldn't do anything much for her either. Her doctors had told her to learn to live with the constant pain she'd been experiencing for several years, and were apparently baffled by her condition.

Laurie explained that the pain had taken over her life. She could no longer work, and her marriage was not doing well. Her relationship with her teenage daughter was also very bad. Laurie said she knew adolescent girls were tough to cope with, but she also knew that they needed some attention, and Laurie was unable to interact with her daughter on most days because of the pain. She felt guilty and inadequate because she felt like a failure, both at work and in her family life.

A friend had suggested that maybe chiropractic would help her to attain some level of health and freedom from pain. She was hesitant because she'd never been to a chiropractor, and wasn't quite sure what the experience would be like.

A complete medical history, as well as new x-rays of Laurie's spinal column, to determine if there were any obvious or subtler areas of trauma. The x-rays were normal, showing no obvious or even probable fractures or traumas. The evidence suggested that Laurie was suffering from myofascial pain syndrome (MPS), a painful problem characterized by “trigger points” of pain, and a limited range of motion in the affected area. It's also a condition that is exacerbated by stress. Ironically, in her worry and fear over finding a way to pain relief, Laurie was inadvertently worsening the condition.

Laurie could point out where the pain spots of her myofascial pain syndrome were located, and knobby points of muscle tissue in each place where she said she was hurting so badly were all readily identified. These trigger points don't show up on x-rays, but a trained and experienced doctor of chiropractic can find them by touch.

A Recommended Action Plan was given, including regular chiropractic adjustments, massage therapy and some good lifestyle changes that Laurie needed to commit to, such as some simple exercises she could perform and a regular plan of walking for at least three times each week. Laurie was cautioned not to expect an instant cure, but instead to look for steady improvement if she followed the recommendations.

After several weeks, and to her obvious amazement, Laurie said the pain was starting to disappear. It wasn't totally gone, and she still had some bad days. But she also had some good days too, something she hadn't seen for years! The time and the distance that Laurie should walk was slightly increased and she continued the simple exercises. The frequency of her care was also reduced to twice a week. Laurie agreed to this plan.

Laurie's situation improved markedly since then, and soon the frequency may even be reduced to once a month should her progress continue.

In other news, Laurie's relationship with her husband and daughter greatly improved. For example, because her pain diminished so much, she's able to pay attention to her husband. (Much to their mutual delight!) Also, instead of fixating on her pain alone, she can listen to what troubles him as well as share the joy he experienced with a recent promotion on the job. She even can go out to dinner with him and his colleagues, something she hadn't done for years! Her daughter is still a teenager, and teenagers can be quite a handful. But now that Laurie can respond to what her daughter needs (not always giving her what she wants, of course!), her relationship with her daughter has also improved.

The pain abated so much that Laurie returned to work part-time, which has been good for her pocketbook and for her self-esteem. Laurie, her husband, and her daughter are all very grateful for the chiropractic care, and it has given her back her life, all because her friend referred her to chiropractic.

Who do you know that may be living needlessly in pain?

(We love helping our patients and their friends and relatives through their tough times and getting them feeling better! We are here to help you stay, feel better and look younger! Don't be a stranger. Call us and we will assist you in putting together a custom maintenance plan. It's not a luxury anymore! With our low monthly payment plan, it's less expensive to maintain your good health! You really can afford Chiropractic care! Don't wait until you can no longer move!)

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Did You Know?...

1. School's nearly out, but here's something important to think about and plan ahead for before next year (and if your child is going to summer school, you need to think about it now): Has your child been lugging a heavy backpack of books on his or her young back, both back and forth to school each day? The problem is even worse if the backpack is slung over one shoulder, concentrating all the weight on one part of the back. In addition, when the backpack is too heavy, the child often leans forward to compensate for the excessive weight. This contorts the body into an unnatural and uncomfortable posture, which can cause pain. Make sure your child's backpack is proportionate to his or her body and that it has straps that can fit over each shoulder. Padded straps are a good idea. You may consider a backpack on wheels, but many schools are banning these devices. It's also a good idea to talk with your child's teachers to find out if it's really necessary to bring all those books home every night. Some schools allow children to keep a separate set of books at home all the time to be turned in at the end of the year. Work with the teacher(s) to find solutions.

2. If you want to retain some measure of privacy, you should be careful when surfing around on the Internet. Many web sites quietly track everything about each visitor and use the information for profiling users, information they will use for their own marketing purposes, and sell to other web marketers who will chase you around to buy their wares. You should read every site's privacy policy, and opt out of information you don't want to receive. Avoid entering on-line contests or sweepstakes, as they are usually only in existence to get email addresses to sell. You can also use software to make yourself more anonymous on-line. Two companies who sell this software are: Zero-Knowledge and Anonymizer. (They both have web sites with their names as the web address, but swear they won't profile you if you go there!)



Tip of the Month...How To Decrease Migraine Headaches

In her book, *The Women's Migraine Survival Guide*, Christina Peterson, M.D., offers some advice on an array of migraine triggers that women (and men too!) with chronic migraines should learn about and avoid. Here are the most common: **Stress** - Stress may be a trigger, says Peterson. When you're under stress, take periodic breaks from difficult activities, alternating tough tasks that require brainpower with other jobs that are more physically oriented. For example, switch from analyzing problems to picking up needed office supplies or to another activity that's a no-brainer.

Bright Lights - Bright lights and glare can cause migraines in some people. If you're outside in bright sunlight, always wear a protective hat and sunglasses, or move to a shady area. If the sun is streaming into the room, it may seem nice. But when you're susceptible to migraines, it's best to put the blinds down to limit glare. If you can't or don't want to do that, then move to another part of the room or to another room. Or put on your sunglasses or slap a ballcap on your head! (Yes, even though you're indoors.) **Odors** - Some people are very sensitive to odors, particularly those from heavy perfume or some cleaning items. You may find that strong aromas can trigger a migraine within several hours. If someone at work drenches herself (or himself) in cologne, tell your colleague you're hypersensitive to aromas. Consider saying that you're allergic to strong perfume, which is more likely to obtain the reaction you want, less heavy-handedness with the spray bottle. **Cigarette and Cigar Smoke** - The odor of cigarette smoke is also a migraine trigger for some people. Fortunately, few workplaces allow smoking, but people do smoke in other locations. If you eat out, always sit in the "non-smoking" section. If there's a wait to be seated, then wait, or go elsewhere. A few minutes' inconvenience is worth it if you can avoid an agonizing migraine later on. **Loud Noises** - Loud noises can trigger migraines in some people, and if you're one of them, you may wish to carry earplugs with you to work. (Don't wear them while you're driving, of course!) **Foods** - Foods are a migraine trigger for some people, especially caffeine, chocolate, aged cheese (like Roquefort or Stilton), onions and garlic. Also, stay away from monosodium glutamate (MSG), a common food additive. **NOTE:** Some people limit their migraines by using white noise machines at work. These devices make a "SSSSH" sound, and help block out noise chaos. Ongoing white noise will still enable you to hear your boss and other key sounds. **If you avoid migraine triggers as best you can, but you still feel a migraine coming on, try icing the pain away. Also, give us a call; we will fit you in for an immediate appointment. Be sure to explain that it's a migraine attack that's coming on. Chiropractic adjustments may be able to stop a migraine "dead in its tracks."** Finally, please remember, if you ever have any questions or concerns about your health, talk to us. Contact us with your, "Here's what I was wondering about", type questions, instead of "Guess what I just did", statements. We're here to help, and don't enjoy anything more than participating in your life long good health!

Patient Of The Month

This month's patient of the month is Mrs. Diane Ott! Congratulations! As usual, the patient of the month will receive a FREE BOOK! Choices are *The Monk Who Sold His Ferrari* by Robin Sharma, *The Seven Habits of Highly Successful People* by Stephen Covey or *The Power of Focus* by Mark Victor Hansen. Watch for your name here in a coming month!