



## *Wellness Wednesday:*

# *The Importance of Sleep*

### **Key messages:**

Adequate sleep is especially important for children as it directly impacts mental and physical development. Growing research shows that children who are sleep deprived are at a higher risk for obesity, Type 2 diabetes, and mental and behavioral problems. A lack of sleep is associated with poor dietary choices and an increase in appetite, meaning there is a greater risk of eating too many calories. There is also science that suggests not getting enough sleep can reduce the body's ability to fight common illnesses such as colds and the flu. Overall, while stress can also interfere with sleep, a lack of sleep can also increase your stress and anxiety levels.

Children ages 6-12 need 9 to 12 hours of sleep each night, while 13-18 year olds need 8 to 10 hours of sleep each night. Adults should aim for 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night.

### **Sleep Tips for School Aged Children**

- Set a consistent sleep schedule and bedtime routine
- Try to follow a daily schedule
- Make a child's bedroom conducive to sleep – dark, quiet, and cool
- Keep TV and computer out of the bedroom
- Avoid TV and Computer close to before bedtime
- Avoid caffeine and sugary foods in the diet
- Spend more time outdoors and be active as much as possible

### **Activity:**

Write down what time you go to sleep tonight and what time you wake up in the morning. Did you get enough sleep?

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