

**NEWS RELEASE  
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**Sleep Well, Be Well: National Campaign Makes Healthy Sleep a Priority**  
*Adequate Sleep as Critical to Overall Health as Nutrition, Exercise*

**(Darien, Ill.)** May 12, 2014 – A nationwide “Sleep Well, Be Well” campaign is being launched today as part of the National Healthy Sleep Awareness Project, a collaboration between the American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Sleep Research Society (SRS). The campaign will promote widespread awareness of the dangers of chronic sleep loss and untreated sleep illness, encouraging Americans to achieve healthy sleep for improved overall health.

“The urgency of our message cannot be overstated: Sleep is a necessity, not a luxury, and the pursuit of healthy sleep should be one of our top priorities,” said Dr. Safwan Badr, president of the AASM and a national spokesperson for the Healthy Sleep project. “Sufficient sleep is one of the three pillars of a healthy lifestyle – as important as good nutrition and regular exercise. There’s no avoiding it or catching up: You must *sleep well to be well.*”

CDC data indicate that 28 percent of U.S. adults report sleeping six hours or less in a 24-hour period. Poor sleep health increases the risk of physical and mental health problems, mortality, accidents, injuries and disability.

“Poor sleep has a cumulative impact on nearly every key indicator of public health, including obesity, hypertension and diabetes,” said Janet B. Croft, PhD, senior chronic disease epidemiologist, in CDC’s Division of Population Health. “Healthy sleep is a vital sign of good health.”

How do we achieve healthy sleep? The Healthy Sleep project recommends the following tips to “Sleep Well, Be Well”:

**Quantity: Get seven to nine hours of sleep each night.** Most adults need at least seven hours of nightly sleep for optimal health and productivity. Set a regular bedtime that is early enough for you to get a full night of sleep. A recent CDC study linked too little sleep (six hours or less) with chronic diseases – including coronary heart disease, diabetes, anxiety and obesity.

**Quality: Getting good sleep is important, too.** Simply achieving seven to nine hours of sleep each night isn’t enough: You also need quality sleep. Avoid anything that can lead to fitful, interrupted sleep.

“It’s important to understand that both the quality and quantity of sleep impact your health,” said SRS President Janet Mullington, PhD. “Alcohol, caffeine and some medications can negatively impact the quality of your sleep – leaving you tossing, turning and waking up feeling unrefreshed despite the opportunity for enough sleep.”

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**Timing: Follow a consistent sleep-wake schedule.** Your body sleeps best at night, when it is dark, and functions best when you keep a regular routine. Try to go to bed at the same time each night and wake up at the same time every morning.

**Health: Seek help for your sleep problems.** Can't stop snoring? Besides being a nuisance to your bed partner, loud and frequent snoring can be a warning sign for obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). OSA is a dangerous, potentially life-threatening disease characterized by episodes of complete or partial airway obstruction during sleep. As many as 12-18 million adults in the U.S. have untreated OSA, and seeking treatment could lead to better sleep, improved health and a better quality of life.

"Millions of people have an untreated sleep illness that prevents them from achieving healthy sleep," said Badr. "Effective treatment of a sleep problem can be life-changing, helping you to be healthier and happier."

If you have difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep, or wake up feeling exhausted, speak with a board-certified sleep medicine physician, who has the training and expertise to diagnose and treat sleep illness.

For more information, or to find a local sleep specialist at an AASM accredited sleep center, visit [www.sleepeducation.org/healthysleep](http://www.sleepeducation.org/healthysleep).

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### **About the National Healthy Sleep Awareness Project**

The National Healthy Sleep Awareness Project was initiated in 2013 through a cooperative agreement between the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. The ongoing project involves a partnership between the AASM, CDC, Sleep Research Society and other collaborators to promote the importance of healthy sleep.

The Healthy Sleep project addresses the sleep health focus area of Healthy People 2020, which provides science-based, 10-year national objectives for improving the health of all Americans. The sleep health objectives are to increase the medical evaluation of people with symptoms of obstructive sleep apnea, reduce vehicular crashes due to drowsy driving and ensure more Americans get sufficient sleep. For more information, visit [www.sleepeducation.org/healthysleep](http://www.sleepeducation.org/healthysleep).

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