

The concept of Rest and Relaxation..!

What is a proper Rest?

Just sleeping is not Rest.

Just immobilizing the body is not Rest.

Not doing anything is also not Rest.

Rest is a proper Rest only, if it

- removes tiredness
- eliminates mental exertion and fatigue
- makes you feel relaxed and energized after the rest
- calms the mind
- reduces and eliminates the muscular tension
- lowers the heart rate
- lowers the blood pressure to normal
- lowers the rate of respiration
- neutralizes or eliminates the stress hormones
- pacifies the stimulated SNS (sympathetic nervous system)
- induces a balancing effect on ANS (autonomic nervous system)
- improves the homeostasis (body's in-built self-regulating mechanism to bring in balance at anatomical and physiological levels, whenever there is an imbalance)
- lowers the basal metabolic rate (significantly lowered, as is experienced during yoga-nidra or meditation, less than 50 cal/hr)
- induces physiological rest to bodily organs and the whole organism
- results in physiological compensation (conservation of the Life Force, also termed as Vital Energy or *Jeevan Shakti*)

Adequate and timely Rest results in significant improvement in most chronic and acute conditions including the psychosomatic conditions such as, fatigue, stress, anxiety, depression, hypertension, asthma, lower energy levels, loss of concentration, lowered immunity, digestion and absorption related problems, etc.

Recommendations for rest and relaxations, which really work...

- Sleep: Go to bed early and take about 6 to 7 hrs sleep at night, but avoid sleeping in the afternoon. The quality of sleep during the night is much better than the day time sleep or sleeping at late hours.
- Quality of sleep is much better when going to bed early. With regular habit of going to bed early, over a period of time, you need less sleep as body gets optimum rest in a shorter period.
- Take rest after each meal. It is favourable to the process of digestion.
- Yoga-nidra: A few minutes of Yoga-nidra in Shavasana (progressive muscular relaxation) could provide deep relaxation. It is said that about 10 to 15 minutes of yoga-nidra in Shavasana provide physical, mental and physiological rest relaxation equivalent to about an hour's sleep.
- There is nothing wrong in resting and relaxing for several hours a day once in a while, if you get time.
- Massage: Take regular relaxation massage or carry out self-massage.
- Consciously relax yourself whenever feel stressed or exhausted physical and/or mentally.
- Pleasurable pastime: Find time for yourself to do things you really like to do. Plan for such pleasurable pastimes on a "regular" basis, such as walking in a garden or woods, going to movies with friends, spending a few minutes in solitude, playing cards with friends, going for a swim or jog, reading books, cooking your favourite dish, etc.

Remember, "The time to relax is when you don't have it"!

Consequences of inadequate rest:

Inadequate rest results in tiredness, exertion, burn-out and eventually lead to fatigue, irritable mind, loss of concentration, muscular stiffness, stimulated SNS, indigestion, repeated illness, many psychosomatic conditions and depletion of the Life Force/Vital Energy/*Jeevan Shakti*; and seriously affect the homeostasis and self-healing,.

Wish you a happy and healthy living...