

impact

University of Idaho Extension programs that are making a difference in Idaho.

UI Extension participants learn how to improve sleep

AT A GLANCE

After attending this wellness presentation, participants were equipped with techniques to improve both sleep quality and quantity.

The Situation

Research reports that 75% of Americans have problems with sleep. This includes 35.3% of individuals obtaining less than seven hours sleep/night on a regular basis and 60% of individuals driving while drowsy. Sleep deprivation contributes to both short-term and long-term health and quality-of-life issues. These range from poor decision making, memory and concentration to increased risk of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and Alzheimer's disease.

Our Response

Family and consumer sciences associate Extension educator for Bonneville County presented one-hour sessions on improving both quality and quantity of sleep. Venues included employee wellness programs, local athletic clubs and public community venues. Sleep topics included assessment of sleep, stages of sleep, number of hours recommended per age group, tips for sleeping better and longer, and a brief discussion of medical sleep disorders. Both daytime and nighttime habits and their effect on sleep were discussed. Recommendations for improving sleep outcomes were presented in detail.



Image from Google images, wsj.com.

Program Outcomes

Of 70 participants, 79% reported that they learned at least one new thing related to improving sleep. Seventy-seven percent reported that they planned to incorporate at least one new practice into their sleep hygiene routine. Intended lifestyle changes included establishing a sleep routine, relaxation techniques, magnesium supplementation (at the Recommended Daily Value) and seeking medical interventions for symptomatic sleep.

The Future

Sleep adequacy plays a crucial role in both short-term and long-term health of body and mind. As sleep deprivation in America continues to be prevalent,

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making research-based education available to the public at large is of utmost importance. This educator will continue to provide education regarding sleep improvement in Bonneville County.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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