Sleep to Better Health

Millions of Americans have trouble sleeping and poor sleep may be costing you more than fatigue.

Sleep deprivation is connected to numerous health problems.

- People with insomnia or sleep apnea (breathing cessation) have increased risk for cardiovascular conditions, such as high blood pressure, stroke, coronary heart disease and irregular heartbeat.
- Insufficient sleep raises the risk for type 2 diabetes, depression and metabolic changes linked to obesity.

The good news? You can sleep better.

First, try exercise. Even a little regular exercise helps. According to the National Sleep Foundation’s 2013 Sleep in America poll:

- Seventy-six percent to 83% of exercisers (including vigorous, moderate and light exercise) said their sleep quality was very good or fairly good.
- Non exercisers are twice as likely as exercisers to have sleep apnea, a major risk for heart trouble.

Identify your sleep robbers. Is worry keeping you awake? Maybe its caffeine (especially close to bedtime) or medications, pain, indigestion or other physical problems. Record your sleep patterns for a month to identify the culprits.

This information comes from the TopHealth – The Health Promotion and Wellness Newsletter April 2014 Edition and distributed by the University of Tennessee Extension Family and Consumer Sciences. Call the extension office at 731-852-2831 if you would like more information on this topic.