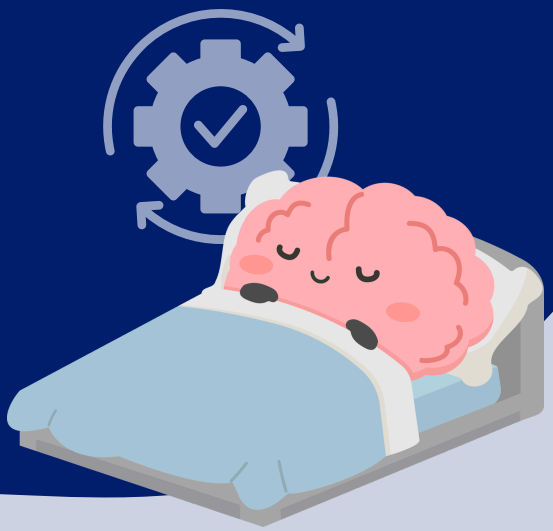
LONG-TERM HEALTH AND SLEEP



During restful sleep, the body undergoes essential maintenance:

- Blood pressure and heart rate slow down, giving your heart a much-needed break.
- Hormones repair micro-damage to blood vessels and arterial walls.
- Cortisol (the primary stress hormone) drops, clearing the bloodstream of harmful inflammation.

The Consequences of Inadequate Sleep

Poor sleep does more than make you tired the next day.

Consistently getting less than seven hours of sleep a night robs your body of critical time to repair itself, increasing your risk for chronic health issues. These serious conditions include:

High Blood Pressure: Poor sleep keeps cortisol and blood pressure elevated, putting harmful strain on the heart and blood vessels. Over time, tiny tears occur in the arterial walls.

Heart Disease: In response, the body's immune system creates chronic inflammation, causing buildup of fatty plaque where the tiny tears occurred.

Heart Attack and Stroke: As plaque narrows the artery, constant high blood pressure can cause a rupture and create a blood clot. If that clot blocks blood flow to the heart, it causes a heart attack; if it blocks blood flow to the brain, it causes a stroke.

Type 2 Diabetes: Spikes in cortisol block insulin from working effectively, driving insulin resistance. Without functioning insulin, sugar builds up in the bloodstream, damaging blood vessels that increase risk for heart disease.

Weight Gain: Hormones that help regulate appetite and digestion are disrupted, making it easier to overeat. Overweight and obesity increase risk for heart disease and type 2 diabetes.

Sleep Disorders Increase the Risk

Some conditions fast-track these health issues such as sleep apnea and chronic insomnia. If you suspect you have either of the following, talk with your doctor or a sleep specialist for proper diagnosis and treatment options.

IMPROVE YOUR SLEEP WITH:



A consistent bedtime routine



Regular physical activity



A balanced diet



Routine doctor visits to manage chronic conditions

Davis COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

LEARN MORE:

daviscountyutah.gov/health/sleep