Sleep Hygiene and Caffeine

It is 4pm and you find yourself suffering from the dreaded “afternoon slump”. Do you A) grab a coffee or energy drink to power through, B) go outside for a brisk walk, or C) take a power nap? If you chose A, you are not alone. In fact, a study revealed 92% of college students consume caffeine in some form. However, caffeine can affect one of the most essential processes for good health, our sleep. While different people have varying tolerance levels, the time of day and the amount of caffeine consumed can either have a positive or negative effect on your sleep and overall health.

How Does Caffeine Affect Sleep?

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends not consuming caffeine within six hours of bedtime because the half-life of caffeine is between four to six hours. For example, if you consume 300mg of caffeine, you will still have 150mg left in your body after five hours.

Caffeine disrupts the quality of your sleep by blocking the effects of the hormone adenosine, which is responsible for deep sleep.

Levels of melatonin, another hormone that helps with the onset of sleep, can drop in the presence of caffeine.

How to Cope with an Afternoon Slump Without Using Caffeine

Tackle the midday slump with an energy boosting snack that includes fiber, protein, and healthy fats. Snack ideas include a Greek yogurt parfait, trail mix, or assorted vegetables, such as carrots and broccoli, with hummus.

Take a moment to hydrate with water; studies show mild dehydration can cause sleepiness.

Step outside and expose yourself to natural light on a brisk walk as natural light can slow the production of melatonin.

Tried all these and still tired? Give your mind and body a break by taking a 20-minute power nap to restore your energy.

Catch some Zzz’s to Brew-ten Your Day!

References:
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