MEDIA RELEASE

Getting a good night’s sleep is about common sense

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Most of the tips associated with getting a good night’s sleep are common sense and not necessarily based on scientific research or evidence according to an article in the latest issue of the *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Surgery* (ANZJS), the peer-review publication of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS).

The article refers to ‘sleep hygiene’, a term used to describe good or bad sleep habits that, depending on a person’s environment or life style, may impact on the quality and duration of sleep.

Some of these tips include only sleeping when sleepy, avoiding nicotine, caffeine and alcohol, getting regular exercise, maintaining a healthy diet and ensuring that the bedroom is a comfortable temperature, free of noise and distractions such as television, music or other devices.

The article, ‘Medicine in Small Doses’, suggests that print or online sleep hygiene education material could be a more intuitive option than seeing a sleep physician.

A study of 900 medical students, referenced in the article, found that the prevalence of poor sleep quality among medical students was high and that there was a strong correlation between good sleep quality and academic performance.

The article also analysed the association between caffeine consumption and getting a good night’s sleep. A study of 80 Australian adults concluded that higher levels of caffeine consumption before sleep, resulted in less time in bed and that it might be more prudent to drink coffee only in the morning and early afternoon. Individuals surveyed said that their quality of sleep was impacted by their level of consumption of caffeine.

The suggestion was made that for improved sleep hygiene and sleep quality, a good night’s sleep may rely more on common sense than scientific evidence.

Read the full article here

*The ANZ Journal of Surgery, published by Wiley-Blackwell, is the pre-eminent surgical journal published in Australia, New Zealand and the South-East Asian region for the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons. The Journal is dedicated to the promotion of outstanding surgical practice, and research of contemporary and international interest.*

About the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons (RACS)

RACS is the leading advocate for surgical standards, professionalism and surgical education in Australia and New Zealand. The College is a not-for-profit organisation that represents more than 7000 surgeons and 1300 surgical trainees and International Medical Graduates. RACS also supports healthcare and surgical education in the Asia-Pacific region and is a substantial funder of surgical research. There are nine surgical specialties in Australasia being: Cardiothoracic surgery, General surgery, Neurosurgery, Orthopaedic surgery, Otolaryngology Head-and-Neck surgery, Paediatric surgery, Plastic and Reconstructive surgery, Urology and Vascular surgery.

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