



The Wellness Newsletter

THE OFFICIAL BULLETIN OF THE KNUST WELLNESS CENTRE

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MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS

– ESTHER OHENewa (MRS.)

BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT

INSOMNIA (CONT)

Side effects of insomnia include (but are not limited to)

- Tiredness during the day
- Reduced energy
- Feeling irritable, anxious or depressed
- Constant worrying about not being able to sleep
- Impaired memory function such as difficulty in concentration
- Lack of motivation
- Poor occupational or academic performance

Managing insomnia

Insomnia can be managed using:

- Pharmacological treatment options OR
- Non-pharmacological measures such as therapy (Cognitive-behavioural therapies)

Sleep Self-Care Practices

Sleep self-care practices can help improve insomnia. Try the following:

- Do not go to bed and get up at different time every day. Establish a regular pattern for going to sleep and waking up
- Do not take naps during the daytime or in the evenings prior to bedtime
- Avoid drinks such as coffee or sodas late in the afternoons. These are powerful stimulants that keeps the body alert even during the night.

- Avoid smoking a cigarette, pipe or cigar before retiring to bed. These contain nicotine which is also a stimulant

- As much as possible try to reduce the noise in your environment (if it is within your control) before retiring to bed

- In situations where the noise in your environment is beyond your control, try as much as possible to create a cozy environment to enable you fall asleep such as putting off the light or dimming any bright light in the room before retiring to bed

- Avoid drinking alcohol in the evenings. A glass of wine can be relaxing but may lead to periods of wakefulness and/or nightmares once its effect wears off

- Avoid heated arguments prior retiring to bed

- Do not use the bedroom for working, be it work related to school or one's job or watching TV

- As much as possible exercise each day but avoid vigorous exercises right before retiring to bed

- Learn relaxation/tension release exercises and practice them

- Try to identify stressors in your life and try to overcome such stressors. If you are unable to overcome such stressors then it is time to speak to a professional for assistance!

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

One exercise you can explore in an attempt to get rid of tension and help you fall asleep is the progressive muscle relaxation.

In this exercise, you will be relaxing your body by tensing your entire body from your toes to your forehead.

- Start by getting into a comfortable position be it lying on the bed or resting your body in a sofa.
- Get a soothing or comforting mental image of preferably a hobby and gently close your eyes (most preferred but not the only approach)
- Focus on deep breathings. Breathe in and out in a rhythmic order
- Now imagine a cold breeze touching your toes and curl your toes as hard as you can and release it
- Curl the arch of your foot and release it gently as well
- Tense your ankle and release it as well
- Tense your calves and release it gently as well
- Pull your stomach in and hold it and gently release it
- Pull in your diaphragm, hold it and gently release it
- Tense your back and chest and shoulders and release it gently
- Tense your arms and make a fist and release it gently
- Tense your neck and release it gently
- Press your eyelids and tense your forehead, frowning as hard as you can and release it gently
- Tense your scalp and release it gently

Note!!!

1. Throughout this period of tensing and releasing, remember to keep breathing in and out
2. Repeat the same step-by-step process but this time round, instead of releasing the tension, hold on to the tension and systematically or gradually tense and hold all the other body parts and gently release all the tensed areas after a period of say 5 to 10 minutes.
3. Remember, this is an exercise so it takes some time for the body to get used to the whole process. Be patient and consistent in training the body to relax using this method.
4. The good news is this exercise can be done during short breaks even at the working environment!

Remember 'your mental health may be YOUR problem but it is connected to MY mental health as well'. Stay healthy, stay well!!!

DEE'S CORNER

"EMBRACING HEALTH: A REFLECTION ON FITNESS"

-MR. DOMINIC OFORI
(FITNESS COACH, KNUST WELLNESS CENTRE)

Following the close of last year, it is natural to reflect on our journey towards health and fitness. The power of community in our fitness journeys cannot be overstated. The year taught us the significance of adaptability and resilience in our fitness routines. Adapting to changing circumstances, modifying workout regimens, and embracing flexibility have been crucial. We have learned that our bodies are adaptable and capable of remarkable feats when given the chance to adjust and evolve. They empower us to focus on progress, not perfection, and to celebrate every step forward on our fitness journey.

Let's take a moment to express gratitude for our bodies. They have carried us through challenging workouts, embraced change, and shown resilience beyond measure. As we have stepped into a new year, let's carry forward the lessons learned and the achievements gained. Let's approach our fitness goals with renewed vigor and a deeper appreciation for the journey ahead. In closing, let's remember that fitness is a journey unique to each of us. Let's celebrate our successes, acknowledge our growth, and embrace the beautiful possibilities that lie ahead in our ongoing pursuit of health and fitness.



On behalf of the Chairperson and members of the KNUST Wellness Committee, we appreciate the management, staff and the student community for participating in our various activities. Last year was such an amazing year with you all involved. We wish you all together with your families a Happy New Year. We pray for more strength in the year.