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Screen Time & Insomnia: What It Means for Teens

For teenagers, sleep plays a critical role in staying healthy, feeling happy, and maintaining good grades. But sleep doesn't come easily for some teens. An increased amount of screen time throughout the day has been linked to insomnia and symptoms of depression in adolescents.

The Blue Light Effect

Electronics emit an artificial blue light that can suppress the release of the body's sleep-inducing hormone, melatonin. In turn, this can interfere with the body's internal clock that signals when it's time to sleep and wake up.

They may experience problems falling asleep as well as difficulty staying asleep. As a result, these teens sleep fewer overall hours; over time, that sleep deprivation can lead to symptoms of depression.

Getting Back on Track

Limiting overall daily screen time can help improve sleep issues, but most importantly, restricting use right before bed can play a key role in helping teens fall asleep faster and improve sleep quality. Consider setting a digital curfew one to two hours before bedtime (the earlier, the better).

There are many benefits to today's tech-driven world: Access to more information, the ability to connect with others in an emergency, and a chance to make friends with new people in new places. Managing the amount of time adolescents spend plugged into their electronic devices helps give them the benefits without as many drawbacks, especially when it comes to sleep.

source: sleepfoundation.org/articles/screen-time-and-insomnia-what-it-means-teens



Spring 2020 Health Matters



Fraud, Waste, or Abuse?

Report potential fraud, waste, or abuse in the CHRISTUS Health Plan Network by submitting details to the Special Investigations Unit via email, secure fax, or phone.

FWA Hotline: **855.771.8072**

Email:

ChristusHealthSIU@ChristusHealth.org

Secure Fax: **210.766.8849**

If you prefer anonymity, call the Integrity Line at **888.728.8383** or visit ChristusIntegrityLink.org.

For compliance questions or concerns, you can email us at CHPCompliance@ChristusHealth.org

Outreach Coordinator

CHRISTUS Health Plan wants to work with you towards improving your health. Our Quality Outreach Coordinator is sending out health reminder letters and doing outreach calls, to help you complete important wellness visits, blood sugar tests, and breast imaging exams. These medical tests and exams are valuable in preventing harm through early detection. We look forward to teaming up with you in reaching a better level of health.

For more information about our Outreach Coordinator, call Member Services at **844.282.3025**.

MC1656



March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

What Is Colorectal Cancer?

Colorectal cancer is cancer that occurs in the colon or rectum. Sometimes it is called colon cancer. The colon is the large intestine or large bowel. The rectum is the passageway that connects the colon to the anus.

Screening Saves Lives

Colorectal cancer is the second leading cancer killer in the United States, but it doesn't have to be. If you are 50 or older, getting a colorectal cancer screening test could save your life. Here's how:

- Colorectal cancer usually starts from precancerous polyps in the colon or rectum. A polyp is a growth that shouldn't be there.
- Over time, some polyps can turn into cancer.
- Screening tests can find precancerous polyps, so they can be removed before they turn into cancer.
- Screening tests also can find colorectal cancer early, when treatment works best.

Who Gets Colorectal Cancer?

- Both men and women can get it.
- It is most often found in people 50 or older.
- The risk increases with age.

Are You at Increased Risk?

Your risk for colorectal cancer may be higher than average if:

- You or a close relative have had colorectal polyps or colorectal cancer.
- You have inflammatory bowel disease, Crohn's disease, or ulcerative colitis.
- You have a genetic syndrome such as familial adenomatous polyposis (FAP) or hereditary nonpolyposis colorectal cancer.

People at increased risk for colorectal cancer may need earlier or more frequent tests than other people. Talk to your doctor about when to begin screening, which test is right for you, and how often you should be tested.

Colorectal Cancer Can Start With No Symptoms

Precancerous polyps and early-stage colorectal cancer don't always cause symptoms, especially at first. This means that someone could have polyps or colorectal cancer and not know it. That is why having a screening test is so important.

source: cdc.gov/cancer/colorectal/pdf/basic_fs_eng_color.pdf



Dear Friends,

Welcome to the newest issue of Health Matters. Spring is just around the corner and so is time in the sun with loved ones.

In this issue, we cover how to spot a stroke and how electronics are affecting your teen's sleep. We also highlight the importance of colorectal cancer screenings and define CTE.

Be sure to check out all of the Awareness Months and Dates on the opposite page.

As always, if you ever have any questions, please feel free to contact Member Services at **844.282.3025**.

Nothing means more to us than knowing we've helped make our members' lives better. We wish you and yours a happy and safe holiday season ahead.

In good health,

Nancy Horstmann
Chief Executive Officer
CHRISTUS Health Plan

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How Weather Affects Allergies



Do your eyes water on windy days? Are you always stuffy when it rains? That's no surprise. Weather is a common allergy trigger. What can you do? Unless you're prepared to settle down in a bunker, there's no way to avoid the weather. But you can work around it and reduce your allergy symptoms.

- Pay attention to the weather. Check local pollen and mold counts. Spend less time outside when you're likely to have problems.
- Prepare for allergies. If you have the same allergy at the same time every year, get ahead of it. Ask your doctor if you can start taking allergy drugs about 2 weeks before you usually start sneezing, coughing, or itching. That way, you can stop them before they start.
- Control your environment. You can't change what's happening outside, but you do have some control over conditions in your house. Use air conditioning to filter out mold and pollen. Use a dehumidifier to ward off mold growth and dust mites.
- Get the right diagnosis. See your doctor to have an allergy skin test, which can show you exactly what triggers your symptoms.

The change of seasons also has a big effect on allergies.

- Spring - Plants begin releasing pollens in February or March. Tree pollens are also a common spring allergy.
- Summer - Early, grass pollen can trigger reactions. Later, ragweed and other weeds can become a problem. Mold can hit its peak in July.
- Fall - Ragweed season usually ends with the first frost in October.
- Winter - Indoor allergens, like pet dander and dust mites, can become more of a problem in winter because you spend more time indoors.

source: webmd.com/allergies/how-weather-affects-allergies#1

Honey Mustard Grilled Chicken

Ingredients

- 1/3 cup Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon steak sauce
- 4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts

Directions

1. Preheat grill for medium heat.
2. In shallow bowl, mix mustard, honey, mayonnaise, and steak sauce. Set aside a small amount of honey mustard sauce for basting, and dip the chicken into the remaining sauce to coat.
3. Lightly oil grill grate. Grill chicken over indirect heat for 18 to 20 minutes, turning occasionally, or until juices run clear. Baste occasionally with reserve sauce during last 10 minutes. Watch carefully to prevent burning.



What is CTE?

Chronic traumatic encephalopathy, or CTE, is in the news, but what is it? CTE is a rare brain degenerative disorder thought to be caused by repeated head traumas.

Although experts are still trying to understand this disorder, it is believed to be seen in some athletes involved in soccer, boxing, football and hockey. Military personnel exposed to explosive blasts, those that have been physically abused, repeated banging of the head, and athletes in other contact sports can also lead to repetitive head injury and risk of developing CTE.

Some signs and symptoms are considered to include: difficulty thinking, impulsive behavior, depression, and emotional instability. Symptoms typically do not begin until years after the injuries and get worse over time. No cure currently exists, but precautions include protective headgear, mouth guards, and adhering to proper return to play protocols after a potential brain injury in sports.

Not everyone who experiences repeated concussion go on to develop CTE. A medical professional should be seen if you or someone you know has suicidal thoughts, head injuries (even if emergency care is not needed), memory problems, and/or personality and mood changes. source: mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/chronic-traumatic-encephalopathy/symptoms-causes/syc-20370921



Spot a Stroke: BE FAST

May is American Stroke Month. Use the infographic below to learn the signs and symptoms of stroke.

Did you know

- 1 in 6 people will have a stroke in their lifetime. Most strokes are preventable.
- 1 in 3 people has high blood pressure, which is the #1 controllable risk factor in stroke.
- Controlling cholesterol gives your arteries the best chance to remain clear of blockages.
- Stroke risk is 2 to 4 times higher among smokers than nonsmokers.

source: stroke.org/en/about-stroke/stroke-risk-factors/stroke-risk-factors-you-can-control-treat-and-improve



BALANCE unsteady



EYES blurry



FACE drooping



ARM weakness



SPEECH difficulty



TIME to call 911



Honor These Awareness Dates and Stay Healthy

March

Brain Injury Awareness Month
Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month
National Nutrition Month
National Sleep Awareness Week (8-14)
First Day of Spring (19)
Doctor's Day (30)

April

Donate Life Month
National Minority Health Month
Parkinson's Awareness Month
Stress Awareness Month
Good Friday (10)
Easter (12)
Earth Day (22)

May

Arthritis Awareness Month
Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month
American Stroke Month
Melanoma Monday (4)
Nurses Week (6-12)
Mother's Day (10)
Memorial Day (25)