

What Sleeping Position is Best for You?

According to the Centers for Disease Control, an estimated 50 to 70 million American adults have a sleep or wakefulness disorder that can affect their lives in serious ways. If you snore nightly or wake up in the morning feeling stiff, it would be good to switch things up at night. Here are some of the advantages and downsides of the most common sleeping positions:

Side sleeping—Side sleeping is by far the most commonly reported sleep position and for good reason—it can have a variety of health benefits. If you snore or have breathing problems, sleeping on your side is the best choice for opening your airways so you can breathe better at night, says sleep specialist W. Christopher Winter, MD, Medical Director of the Martha Jefferson Hospital Sleep Medicine Center in Charlottesville, Virginia. It can also be ideal for your spine and may help ease low back pain. Moreover, sleeping on your left side could help the flow of blood to your heart. When your heart pumps blood out to your body, it gets circulated and then flows back to your heart on the right side. The downside to sleeping on your side is “capillary crush,” when the weight you are putting on your arm or another numb body part is putting intense pressure on your blood vessels. Studies reveal that side sleeping can increase acid reflux and heartburn at night. If you frequently suffer from indigestion at night, it would be best to switch to another sleeping position.

Back sleeping—Sleeping on the back is the best position for getting high quality sleep. It is the only position you can sleep in all night without having to adjust. When you sleep on your back, your weight is evenly distributed across your skeletal frame, unlike other positions. If you have lower back pain, sleeping on the back with your knees propped up by pillows could take some pressure off your spine and relieve pain. While back sleeping is beneficial for many people, it is not for everyone. When you are on your back, your upper airway is the least stable. This might increase snoring or experience worse symptoms of sleep apnea.

Stomach sleeping—If you are a back sleeper who snores and you cannot switch to sleeping on your side, laying on your stomach could be a good compromise that can open your airways a bit. While there are not many advantages to sleeping on the stomach, there are a few drawbacks. Experts consider this the worst sleeping position because you have to turn your neck to a 90 degree angle from your body while also raising your head and neck up to pillow height. It's also not great for your back, as the curvature of your spine is actually going to cause direct pressure on the lower part of your vertebrae. Over time, this will cause lower back pain.

Summer Safety

On June 20, Nurse Hall had the privilege of teaching the kindergarten classes of DC Scholars about summer safety and playground etiquette. She emphasized wearing helmets, seat belts, and looking both ways before crossing the street. She also discussed the proper way to use the playground sliding board. Most importantly, students were wished a happy summer and a safe return to school in August.

Sue Hall, RN
School Nurse, DC Scholars PCS

July Health Observances

Cord Blood Awareness Month

Juvenile Arthritis Awareness Month

National Cleft and Craniofacial Awareness and Prevention Month

UV Safety Month

Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

World Hepatitis Day (July 28)

Healthy Recipe of the Month– No Bake Pumpkin Cookies

Ingredients:

- 1 cup pitted medjool dates
- 3/4 cups pumpkin puree
- 1/2 cup coconut oil, melted
- 1 inch vanilla bean, scraped out (or 1 teaspoon vanilla extract)
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 2 cups unsweetened desiccated coconut
- Dash of salt

Directions:

1. Place the dates in a microwave safe bowl and cover with water
2. Microwave for 1-2 minutes, or until the dates soften a bit
3. Place in a food processor and add the pumpkin, coconut oil, vanilla, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg and salt
4. Process until pureed.
5. Add the coconut flakes and process until combined
6. Drop by heaping tablespoonful's onto a cookie sheet
7. Freeze until set (but not frozen)
8. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator

CSS Nurses in the Community

Ward 8 school nurses Egypt Middleton and Al-Bari Al-Quran were nursing volunteers on Saturday, June 25 at the first aid tent during the Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) Region 3 Qualifier for track and field. The event was hosted by the Marlboro Boys and Girls Club Track and took place at Flowers High School in Springdale, MD. The nurses treated the injuries of children from ages seven to eighteen and gave other assessments as needed.

Egypt Middleton, BSN, RN
School Nurse, Leckie ES



Al-Bari Al-Quran (left) and Egypt Middleton

The Cereal Drive at Key ES

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a pyramid that outlines five interdependent levels of basic human needs that must be satisfied, in a strict sequence, in order to motivate humans. The pyramid shows that before safety, love/belonging, esteem, and self-actualization can be met, one's physiological needs (breathing, food, water, and sleep) must be met. In Washington, DC, one in seven households suffers from hunger. As some of our students take a break from us for the summer, we know that "breakfast does not take a summer vacation." While Children's National Health System realizes that we cannot fix the hunger epidemic alone and overnight, we do understand that we can play a part in the solution. From May 27 through June 10, the hospital hosted its 6th Annual Cereal Drive. Special thanks to Viktoria

Holley-Trimmer of Key ES who involved and challenged parents and staff and was able to collect over 517 individual boxes of cereal. Kudos to CSS! Next year, let's try to collect even more!



Jamara Washington, MSN,BSN,RN
School Nurse, Ballou ES

The Bike Safety Program at Drew ES

Sally Wilson, RN, is the Education, Prevention, and Outreach Coordinator at Children's National Health System. Wilson recently made a visit to Drew ES to share a bike safety presentation to preschool and pre-kindergarten students. Students were fitted for helmets and received one to take home after watching a bike safety video. The children rode a bike on an obstacle course to learn safety tips while riding. They were so excited and learned that they did not have to sacrifice their safety while having fun. The students made thank you cards and presented them to Ms. Wilson. We all appreciate Ms. Wilson's hard work and wish her well on her retirement.



Nurse Moore pictured with a student.



Nurse Moore pictured with Sally Wilson, Education, Prevention and Outreach Coordinator at Children's National Health System

Rose Moore, BSN, RN
School Nurse, Drew ES

"Books on the Beach" Family Literacy Day at Drew ES

Drew ES students and parents participated in an exciting event called "Books on the Beach". The school was set up like a beach and students and parents had to rotate to each beach site and read books. Parents were exposed to literacy resources and walked away with practical strategies to support literacy during the summer months at home. The students experienced a day of family fun and committed to reading during the summer. After doing all of the activities on the beach, the lifeguards signed off for a raffle give away.



Nurse Moore pictured with student at "Books on the Beach" literacy event at Drew ES

Rose Moore, BSN, RN
School Nurse, Drew ES

The 5K Run/Walk at the 48th Annual NASN Conference

The National Association of School Nurses 48th Annual Conference was held June 30th through July 3 in Indianapolis, IN. This year, the NASN Endowment Fundraising Committee planned a 5K run/walk for nurses and the public. The Endowment Fund raises funds to support research, thereby improving the quality of healthcare in school children and also providing scholarships to nurses. Several DCNA nurses participated in the 5K run/walk including Doretha Daniels, Garnett Freeman, Valerie Horne, Michelle Kuhn, Patricia Tolson, and Chloe Bynum. Nurse Daniels finished the race in third place! I encourage my fellow nurses to become active within your professional organizations. The benefits are so rewarding! See you in San Diego, California for the 49th Annual NASN Conference next June.



(Left to right: Chloe Bynum, RN, Garnett Freeman, RN, Patricia Tolson, RN, Michelle Kuhn, RN, Doretha Daniels, RN and Valerie Horne, RN after the 5K walk)

Chloe Bynum, BSN, RN
School Nurse, Cesar Chavez PCS

This newsletter is published monthly by the Children's School Services School Health Nursing Program.

Natalie Peart, MA
Program Coordinator, Editor
npeart@childrensnational.org

Sharon Bostic, DNP, MBA, BSN, RN, CPN
Director of Quality and Education

Colleen E. Whitmore, MSN, RN, FNP
Interim Executive Director
Director of Nursing