

Introduction because  
the body and the  
brain are



\n[[toc title="Table of Contents"](#)]\n

\n \t

1. [Introduction](#) \n \t
2. [Sleeping Theory](#) \n \t
3. [Problems of “ Poor” Sleep Habits](#) \n \t
4. [Sleep-Wake Cycle](#) \n \t
5. [Conclusion](#) \n \t
6. [Works Cited](#) \n

\n[/toc]\n \n

## **Introduction**

This paper is set to synthesize the evolution sleep in animals, its benefits and the recent knowledge that is linked to this natural phenomenon of near unconsciousness. “ A Third of Life” addressed what is sleep and its purpose while “ Improving Sleep” discusses the stages of sleep and its patterns in animals and human beings. The final article, America’s sleep addresses awareness of sleep deprivation impact and how to improve lifestyle to ensure better sleep. This analysis combines all these information into describing sleep and its implication on animals.

Essentially sleep evolved as a crucial phenomenon for the survival of animals

## **Sleeping Theory**

A major concern for scholars has been why do animals sleep? “ What is it for?” (p. 463) The “ A Third of Life” article demonstrates that during sleep, “...it is not just a matter of closing the eyes and being unconscious...” rather the brain remains active as the Electroencephalogram (EEG) would indicate <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-because-the-body-and-the-brain-are/>

in “improving sleep” article (474). This means that sleep is not just mere absence of wakefulness but has a very important physiological benefit. Besides, when animals are deprived sleep, they show some disruptions of the normal body function in form of a number of symptoms such as synaptic changes (Epstein & Mardon, 56). Sleep is induced by the brain based on the circadian cycle in most animals though its function has not been so clear but some theories have been postulated to explain its purpose, according to “A Third Of Life” article.

Thus, when animals are deprived of it they present symptoms of stress, but those animals that get enough sleep are more alert, active and healthier (Dement & Vaughan 103). Sleep has been described as a way of conserving and restoring energy so that the animal feels fresh and active. However, the major concern here has been why the phenomenon of having to spend a considerable part of the day sleeping evolved (Epstein & Mardon, 56). There are theories that this has improved survival in species hence leading to another major question, ‘How does sleep improve survival?’ The brain could have been designed to sleep for very shorter periods of time instead of a very long time span such as 5 to 9 hours.

Some theories purport that the answer lies in the vulnerability of animals to danger when they remain awake all day. “Essentially, most animals and human beings are biologically designed to sleep almost at the same...” (p. 464) time, instead of being awake all day and night. This sleeping cycle helps protect species otherwise, predators would hunt and deplete their prey and then starve to death hence terminating existence of animal species. Sleep improves survival as animal behavior is controlled by sleep patterns.

<https://assignbuster.com/introduction-because-the-body-and-the-brain-are/>

## **Problems of “ Poor” Sleep Habits**

When human beings are deprived of sleep because of poor sleeping habits, their bodies react and they show a variety of symptoms related to problems of lack of sleep.

Lack of sleep causes irritability and tiredness ...“ people deprived on sleep are left with potentially dangerous activities,...people have hardship in finishing tasks that require high concentration and in most cases sleep deprived people suffer mood swings, high tension and depression” (p. 480). A person feels lazy and easily provoked because of lack of energy (Epstein & Mardon, 64). This makes a person unproductive. Sleep deprivation also interferes with social behavior making a person socially inept. A person is unable to communicate effectively or understand what other people are saying. Lack of sleep affects memory where it impairs a person’s cognition.

This led to poor memory and a person can fail to remember issues that happened minutes or hours ago. The person can only have vague recollection of things or even some that never happened at all. When a person expresses these symptoms, they also lose ability to concentrate because the body and the brain are exhausted and cannot concentrate (Epstein & Mardon, 66).

“ insufficient sleep is directly associated with deteriorating health and research show that individual may suffer heart disease, blood pressure, obesity and diabetes as well as premature death” (p. 471). Benefits of Good Sleep is numerous and it is advisable to always have adequate sleep to attain these benefits.

Good sleep keep a person healthy and a person can survive adverse health problem like heart disease and stroke (Epstein & Mardon, 86). People who work longer hour have higher risks of developing cancer and studies show that melatonin released during sleep suppress tumor growth. Good sleep helps the body to refresh and reduce stress. When a person is awake and active, there is increased production of stress hormone which in turn causes increased risk of heart attack and other cardiovascular diseases (Epstein & Mardon, 86).

Good sleep allows the body to freshen up and a person stays alert and energized when he/she wakes up the next day. This way, an individual is active and productive the rest of the day. Sleep also bolsters a person's memory (Epstein & Mardon, 89).

Memory consolidation takes place during sleep when the body is resting and this helps to connect sensory inputs and other perceptions hence building good memory. Sleep helps in reduction of depression because during sleep, the body releases serotonin which reduces risk or depression. Improving Sleeping habits: In order to be able to attain good night's sleep " an individual should set consistent sleeping pattern with constant bedtime and awake time for all the days of the week even on the weekends and they hours slept should be 7 to 9 hours of sleep". An individual should create relaxing bedtime habit like taking a shower before bed, reading a soothing story or watching a movie. An individual has to keep the bedroom very comfortable, cool, quiet and darker when it is time for sleep. In order to get good sleep it is advisable to avoid taking coffee before going to bed; Also "

create a sleep friendly bedroom where distractions like televisions are not part of it or setting the limits of use before sleep time” (p.

486). Each morning after waking up, put on bright light immediately it should be avoided in the late evening before sleep.

## **Sleep-Wake Cycle**

How is sleep for most Americans? Together with genetics, the circadian cycle plays a big role in the determination of the amount of sleep a person may require in a day at every stage of development. “ The newborn babies are able to spend up to 18 hours a day sleeping,” however as the infants grow into toddlers at age one to three years, they can sleep for up to 13 hours a day and the number keeps on reducing until when these children reach adolescence. Teenagers can sleep up to 9 hours though 8 hours are enough to refresh them fully (McNamara et al, 78).

However, Americans have been termed people of a society deprived of sleep. The reason has been that beginning from childhood through adolescence, children have pressures of academics, sports and dating therefore they end up cutting the time they spend sleeping. For the adults, sleeping is affected by working schedules and other family responsibilities that require much of their time.

Pregnant women or women in their menopause ages usually experience considerable changes in their sleep-wake pattern. During menopause women can experience hot flushes which could cause them to be awake a considerable part of the night and the quality of sleep is adversely affected. As such, these women may suffer insomnia and sleep apnea (McNamara et <https://assignbuster.com/introduction-because-the-body-and-the-brain-are/>

al, 78). This is because of the hormonal changes that take place during that stage of life. Contrary to the belief that sleep is reduced among older people because of the awakenings they experience in the night, studies show, they still need the same amount of sleep and these awakenings are compensated for by napping during the day.

## **Conclusion**

The articles “ A third of life”, “ improving sleep”, and “ America’s sleep”, help to draw conclusions that sleeping is very important for good health and for species survival.

However, with the current hassles and tussles of modern daily lives, many people do not have enough sleep and therefore suffer the consequences. In the western societies, like in America, many people struggle to endure more hours of wakefulness considering sleeping as waste of time (McNamara et al, 79). However, deprivation of sleep could be detrimental. The article, “ Improving sleep” states that enough sleep helps to keep a person healthy and the body functions well especially the immune system and the individual can perform better at work. The article “ America’s Sleep” has shown that sleep deprivation can be a risk factor for developing diabetes or cardiovascular diseases.

## **Works Cited**

Dement, William and Vaughan, Christopher. *The Promise Of Sleep: A Pioneer In Sleep Medicine Explores The Vital Connection Between Health, Happiness, And A Good Night’s Sleep*. New York: Dell, 2000.

Print Epstein, Lawrence and Mardon Stephen. *Improving Sleep: A Guide to a Good Night's Rest*. Boston: Harvard Medical School, 2008. Print McNamara, Patrick.

Barton, Robert A. and Nunn, Charles. *Evolution of Sleep: Phylogenetic and Functional Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Print