

YOUR DENTIST CAN SAVE YOUR LIFE

Holiday health tip: Don't compromise on sleep!

By Dr. Gabrielle Cannick

I know you are feeling it. The pressure of the holidays is upon us. Let's just compare: I will wager that my "to do" list is every bit as long as yours!

But amid the hustle and bustle we still need sleep to enjoy the holiday and precious time with family and friends. Experts in holiday sleep problems advise us to recognize and confront the holiday "triggers" that can cause stress and even result in depression. Things like financial pressures and family demands including parties, shopping, baking, cleaning and entertaining, etc. The solution they advise is (1) pre-plan (make a list!), (2) don't be shy eliciting support from others, and (3) keep a positive attitude.

But above all — to fully enjoy the season — they advise keeping your sleep routine in order. To avoid zombie days and zombie nights during the holidays try this:

- Try to keep on your regular sleep schedule. It may seem impossible, but it's not. Go to bed and wake up at the same time. If you attend an event and stay up late, get up at the same time even if you feel tired.
- Try not to eat within two hours of going to



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bed. If you are hungry go with fruit. By the way, milk contains an amino acid that research shows can help you sleep.

• Your bedroom is your inner-sanctum. Cut noise. Wear ear-plugs if you must. Eliminate ambient light. Off with electronics. With holiday excitement it may seem like

tough love, but make your children sleep in their own beds. You need YOUR rest.

• No caffeine or alcohol four hours before bedtime. Two tips: Chocolate contains caffeine. Alcohol is a depressant and does not help you sleep. When your body metabolizes alcohol during sleep it can wake you up!

• Does meditation work? Practice keeping your mind calm and anxiety-free at bedtime. Thoughts like going over your list and wondering "how am I ever going to get all this done" are sleep killers. Start winding down an hour before crawling into bed.

• Get lots of exercise. It helps promote deeper sleep. Experts advise tensing and relaxing certain

muscle groups one at a time to create awareness of tension and relaxation.

And lastly, when you compromise your sleep you increase the chances of gaining weight. By staying on top of your game and making smart choices you can maintain your sleep and at the same stay healthy! Our practice can help with sleep issues. We are here for you. If you have questions, please contact us. Think of us as your hometown resource for guidance and support.

Dr. Gabrielle F. Cannick is the owner of Grand Oaks Dental, located at 3905 Liberty Highway in Anderson. A strong believer that dental fear and anxiety should not prevent any patient from receiving the highest quality dental care, Dr. Cannick has received extensive training in Sedation Dentistry and is a certified member of the Dental Organization for Conscious Sedation. She is also a member of the South Carolina Dental Association, the American Dental Association, the Academy of General Dentistry, and the American Academy of Dental Sleep Medicine.

For more information about Grand Oaks Dental and the services provided, please call 864-224-0809, or click to [grandoaksdental.com](http://www.grandoaksdental.com) or visit us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/GrandOaksDental>.

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