

WTNS Radio OSU Extension Update for December 12, 2022
Healthy People. Healthy Finances. Healthy Relationships.

On today's OSU Extension update for Healthy People, Healthy Finances, & Healthy Relationships we'll talk about "coronasomnia", and as always look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension.

When I went out to feed the goats this morning, I was happily greeted by two of my favorite does. Luna and Corona were two of my son's first kids on our farm. Corona's name will forever remind us she was born in April 2020. It is interesting how many names out there are associated with the pandemic. One that caught my eye this week is "coronasomnia" from an OSU Extension Live Healthy Live Well blog by my colleague Jenny Lobb.

Coronasomnia is insomnia that has been worsened by or developed from the stress associated with the pandemic. Certain groups of people have an increased risk including people who have had COVID-19, frontline and essential workers, unpaid caregivers, women, young adults, and people of color. According to the Sleep Foundation, healthcare workers have been more than twice as likely to report anxiety and depression during the pandemic, which has affected their sleep.

Prior to 2020, about one-third of Americans experienced regular sleep deprivation. That number jumped to about 40% during the pandemic. Whether you have experienced insomnia in the past or these sleep troubles have come on more recently, there are steps you can take to improve your sleep.

The American Association of Sleep Medicine offers the following tips:

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule. Get up at the same time every day, even on weekends or during vacations. "Catching up" on sleep has been associated with increased risk of heart disease.
- Napping during the day may do more harm than good. A brief nap of 10-20 minutes may be refreshing, but if you struggle with insomnia try eliminating daytime naps altogether.
- Set a consistent bedtime that is early enough for you to get at least 7-8 hours of sleep. It may be helpful to set an alarm on your phone or watch to remind you to begin your bedtime routine.

- It may sound childish but establishing a bedtime routine is helpful to trigger your mind and body to prepare for sleep. This could involve turning down lights, reading (not from an electronic screen), or taking a warm bath. Avoid drinking alcohol or caffeine or eating a large meal.
- Make your bedroom quiet and relaxing. Keep the room at a comfortable, cool temperature. It may be helpful to keep it dark with light-blocking (blackout) curtains.
- If you don't fall asleep within 20 minutes, get out of bed. Go do a quiet activity without a lot of light exposure. It is especially important to not get on electronics.

Lobb also shares that in addition to the habits above, establishing daily routines and getting outside at least once each day, ideally in the morning, can help reinforce your natural sleep-wake cycle. Finding ways to cope with stress is also important, as stress makes sleep difficult. Exercise, mindfulness practice and taking breaks from the news are all ways to reduce and manage stress. The Alaska Sleep Clinic has found that sleep disturbance can be successfully addressed by offering prayers. “Prayers enhance our faith, make us optimistic, and help us relax.”

If you find that you are struggling with insomnia and it is affecting your quality of life, consider reaching out to the Ohio State Sleep Disorders Center. You can find more information by searching for the Wexner Medical Sleep Disorders Center.

And now let's look at some upcoming programs from OSU Extension. Direct food marketing in Ohio is hot. The latest USDA survey identified over 7,000 Ohio farms with direct food sales—third highest in the nation. OSU Extension is hosting a three-part webinar series on “Starting a Food Business,” to help producers wanting to sell home-based and farm-raised foods directly to consumers and retailers. I hope you'll join me for this free webinar series which includes *Start-Up Basics* on January 24, *Selling Home-Based Foods* on February 29 and *Selling Meat and Poultry* on March 28. Find details and the registration link at go.osu.edu/foodbusiness.

In closing, at OSU Extension, we are proud to work for Coshocton County to help educate and improve our families, farms, and businesses. Please feel free to contact OSU Extension for more information at 740-622-2265 or visit our website at coshocton.osu.edu. Make it a healthy day!