

Sleep: Recharging your "Brain Battery" *By Joel Metelits, MD*

In the previous column "Dead Bone Tired and Don't Even Know it", we discussed the importance of sleep, the rationalizations tired people use to persuade themselves that they do not have a sleep problem, and the coping tools tired people sometimes use to function (such as overeating, overactivity, and smoking).

Assuming you are aware that you often feel dead bone tired, you certainly want to fix it- but how? That depends on what is getting in the way of your nightly "brain battery charge"— i.e., your sleep.

Suppose you thought falling asleep and being asleep could be accomplished by being "knocked out". Famous pop star Michael Jackson thought that too. He was so rich he could afford the most expensive personalized health care imaginable, and chose to get "anesthetized to sleep". He was not awake, but he was certainly not charging his "sleep battery"; instead he was in a drug induced nightly "coma". He accomplished not having to suffer the frustration and difficulty of falling and staying asleep, but at a great cost. His false "sleep" could never have effectively charged his "brain battery".

Experts estimate the incidence of insomnia in adults as one in three occasional sufferers and one in ten chronic sufferers. Insomnia can reduce quality of life, increase risk of mood disturbances, adversely affect medical health, and cause increased falls and accidents. So it is important to treat chronic insomnia. The treatment will depend on the cause. It is always best to tailor the treatment to the cause of the sleep disorder. If you live tired, work with you doctor to find out why and then devise a treatment plan.

The goal of treatment is to:

- Charge the "brain battery" (not to be "knocked out")
- Wake up rested and with a sense of well-being (not to need a shower and a pot of coffee to hold your eyelids open)
- Have energy left after your work day ends (not to pass out in front of the TV)
- Sometime the cause of insomnia is simple, sometimes it's complex, but it is almost always treatable. Let's work to stamp out living tired!

A Patient's Perspective



Hank Klaar wants everyone to know that Thunderbird Internal Medicine did not meet his expectations.

"Walking into a new practice, especially one as large as Thunderbird, I expected a cold, clinical atmosphere," he said. "Boy was I wrong! Everybody is

so happy there. From the moment I hit the front desk, I was treated like I was part of the family. Everywhere I looked, people are smiling — the staff and the patients."

During his first visit in May, Mr. Klaar spoke with other patients while waiting for a lab test. He learned that others there felt the same way. "It's just an unusual office. Excellent service quality and you can tell that everyone who works there genuinely enjoys what they're doing."

The retired tool and die maker recently felt the need to look for a new doctor and researched a number of practitioners before selecting David Warfield, MD. "I found more than a doctor...I found a good, professional and compassionate organization with great attitudes!"