

Sleep Deprivation and Skin

by Annet King (as seen in Skin Inc.)

Shakespeare wrote that sleep “knits up the ravell’d sleeve of care.” Getting a good night’s sleep may be even more difficult today than in The Bard’s time. A primary cause for a sleep-deprived lifestyle is exposure to the blue light from the screens of electronic devices. Artificial light can prevent the pineal gland from releasing melatonin, the natural brain-chemical that invites sleepiness as dusk falls. This is the circadian rhythm, which has shaped human metabolism for millennia—until now.



Everyone knows how occasional sleep deprivation feels. The causes differ; from temporary sleep deprivation because of a new baby, a great party, travel, or an unusually large workload, to long-term sleep deprivation from chronic sleep loss or insomnia. But, regardless of cause, sleep deprivation can make simple decision-making more difficult, erode short-term memory, decrease physical coordination and agility, compromise the immune-system, make the individual feel more emotionally fragile and volatile and even swell the waistline.

Skin Never Sleeps

Human skin is the first line of defense between internal tissues and organs and a big, hostile world that is chock-full of pathogens and other dangers. Skin tirelessly fights back all day and all week against free radicals generated by UV, stress, processed foods, cigarette smoke and other environmental toxins. Just another reason why sunscreens and antioxidants are as essential to skin stamina as that first coffee may be to getting the morning started.

Nighttime Body and Skin

When your head hits the pillow, ideally your blood-pressure gently lowers, allowing you to drift into pleasant sleepiness, deep rest and finally the rapid eye movement (REM) cycle. Breathing slows and deepens. While humans are not literally immobile during sleep, the muscles, joints, tendons and ligaments do relax.

All of these changes allow the body, including the skin, to repair and replenish after the stresses of the day. In fact, cell regeneration increases by double at night, and production of collagen also escalates.

Even if clients do not have sleep issues, remind them to cleanse skin thoroughly before bed. This routine should include a pre-cleanser step to dissolve skin adhering sunscreens and sweat-proof cosmetics. Recommend specialized overnight products, specifically those with microencapsulated retinol and the

new wave of peptides. Cleansed, resting skin is more readily available to absorb these helpful ingredients.

Sleep-deprived Client?

If you're curious about whether your client is sleep deprived, ask. Inquire about the quality of their sleep and any possible stimulants they might be ingesting. Some clients forget that herbal teas like silver needle white tea can contain considerably high levels of caffeine.

While asking, examine the face and throat (ideally under a mag lamp) feeling for hot spots, dry areas and more. For instance, a congested, sometimes flaky zone between the brows (a place we call the “wine and dine”) area often signals late-night dining.

Other signs of a sleep-deprived client are:

- Dark shadows and puffiness. These are a sign of poor circulation and sluggish elimination. Consider that some people of Middle Eastern descent may have persistent bruise-like coloring as a genetic trait due to the orbit bone structure.
- Sallow, lackluster, dehydrated skin. This is a sign of poor circulation, which means less nutrients are getting to cells. The barrier function is also affected and subsequently TEWL is greater in poor sleepers.
- Skin infections and cold sores. Sleep deprivation impairs the immune system, meaning less cytokines to combat bacteria and viruses. Pimples and cuts will also be slower to heal.

5 Tips for Better Sleep

Below are five tips to provide your clients with so that they have restful sleep for glowing skin. Remember to keep them in mind for yourself too —rested estheticians also result in better skin!

1. Develop a routine and go to bed at the same time every night. Our bodies love repetition.
2. Working out early, at midday or dusk is ideal. Big cardio after dark revs up the metabolism and makes sleep elusive.
3. Stop caffeine mid-day, and no sugary treats after 7 p.m.
4. Eat dinner earlier — at dusk is ideal. A light dinner also requires less digestion and makes sleep easier.
5. Take an aromatherapy-infused bath, then go to bed. Also, turn off the computer and never have a TV in the bedroom. Turning out lights progressively throughout the evening may also help to invite deep peaceful sleep.

Reference:

- www.journalsleep.org/ViewAbstract.aspx?pid=29095

- http://media.cleveland.com/health_impact/other/Lauder%20Sleep%20Skin%20Study%202013%20IID%20Poster%#sthash.l26Cd5Yl.dpuf