

The background features several abstract blue watercolor-style shapes. On the left, there are two overlapping, soft-edged shapes. On the right, a series of thin, parallel, curved lines sweep across the page. At the bottom left, there is a cluster of small, dark blue dots of varying sizes.

# Sleep & Mental Health

By: Logan Sherrer, Doctorate of Occupational Therapy Student

# Objectives

1. Participants able to recall and demonstrate practices to help improve their sleep
2. Participants able to explain the importance of good sleep hygiene for climbing performance
3. Participants able to explain the importance of good sleep hygiene for participation in daily occupations
4. Participants possess a greater motivation to improve sleep for daily functions and climbing performance

The background features several decorative elements in shades of blue. On the left, there is a large, vertical watercolor splash that tapers towards the bottom, with numerous small, dark blue dots scattered around it. At the top right, there are several parallel, horizontal brush strokes. In the bottom right corner, there are two overlapping, soft-edged watercolor shapes. The central text is rendered in a bold, black, serif font.

**How does a poor  
night of sleep  
impact your  
mental health?**



# Poor sleep's impact on mental health

## Reduced productivity

- Reduced attention

## Decrease mood stability

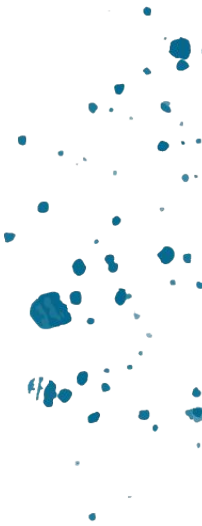
- Increased agitation
- Decreased social ability

## Increased risk taking behaviors

## Increased risk of mental health disorders

- Increase in anxiety or depression
- People with anxiety/depression may experience insomnia more often

## Decreased problem solving skills

- May impair many daily occupations
  - Decreased safety
- 



# Positive impacts of sleep

**Allows our body  
to heal and fight  
sickness**

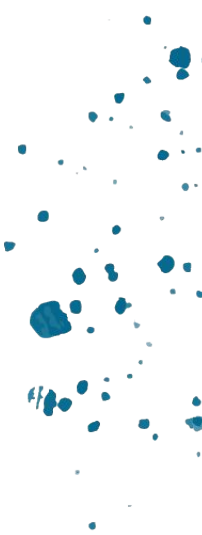
**Promotes muscle  
recovery**


**Increases  
cognitive  
processing**

**Reduces risk for  
negative mental  
health outcomes**

**Decreases risk of  
health problems**

**Helps to support  
healthy digestion**



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**How does  
quality of sleep  
impact your  
climbing?**

# Sleep and climbing

- Muscle recovery
  - Not allowing your body proper rest prevents it from recovering after a long climbing session leading to less strong days on the walls
- Impaired problem solving
  - Impaired ability to problem solve may lead to decreased performance in climbing and challenges with overcoming difficult climbs
- Risk taking behaviors
  - Impaired risk taking behaviors may impair ability to make safe decisions for you and your climbing partner

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**What routines  
help with your  
sleep?**



# How to improve improve sleep

- Set a schedule
  - Going to bed and waking up at the same time each day can help your body learn to prepare for sleep
  - Try establishing before bed rituals to help relax such as taking a bath, drinking tea, meditating, or reading a book
- Exercise
  - Exercising at least 30 minutes a day can help to improve sleep
  - Exercising later in the day or right before bed may actually disrupt ability to sleep
- Lifestyle changes
  - Avoid caffeine or nicotine later in the day
  - Avoid blue light 30 minutes before bed
    - Cell phone
    - TV

# How to improve sleep

- Change sleep environment
  - Make your bedroom a relaxing space
    - Reduce overhead light
    - Do not lay in bed unless it is for sleep
    - Find a mattress or pillow that is most comfortable for you
- Don't lie in bed awake
  - If you are unable to sleep get up and try resetting rather than laying down restless
    - Light exercise or stretching
    - Perform bedtime routine
- Seek a doctor if sleep does not improve
  - Sleep aids such as melatonin may be an alternative

# Survey



# Group Sign-ups

Thank you for your interest in The Spot's mindfulness series! If you want to learn more consider using the links below to sign up for one or more mental health groups led by Logan Sherrer, a Doctorate of Occupational therapy student.

[Denver](#)

[Golden](#)

[Louisville](#)

[Thornton](#)

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**Additional readings:  
Current research on  
the benefits of sleep  
and climbing for  
mental health**

# Evidence to support therapeutic benefits of rock climbing

- Exercise alone has long time been a proven way to reduce anxiety (Karg et al., 2020)
- Exercise causes our body to increase heart rate and respiration to trick the mind into responding to a fear response even if something is not actually there
- Climbing as a form of exercise or recreation is found to be even more effective than traditional exercise alone (Karg et al., 2020)
  - Outlet for adrenaline
  - Clears the mind
  - Community engagement and support

## Information from:

Karg, N., Dorscht, L., Kornhuber, J., & Luttenberger, K. (2020). Bouldering psychotherapy is more effective in the treatment of depression than physical exercise alone: Results of a multicentre randomised controlled intervention study. *BMC Psychiatry*, 20(116), 1–13.  
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-020-02518-y>

# Cultural considerations

- Evidence suggests that community-based exercise is an effective means to provide mental health support to marginalized and lower-socioeconomic communities (Lamb et al., 2015)
- These individuals may not have as easy or comfortable access to traditional mental health services
  - Community engagement and exercise reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression
- Climbers should continue to provide a welcoming and culturally sensitive community (Lamb et al., 2015)
  - Supportive communities help to reduce external stressors

## **Information from:**

Lamb, Dowrick, C., Burroughs, H., Beatty, S., Edwards, S., Bristow, K., Clarke, P., Hammond, J., Waheed, W., Gabbay, M., & Gask, L. (2015). Community Engagement in a complex intervention to improve access to primary mental health care for hard-to-reach groups. *Health Expectations: an International Journal of Public Participation in Health Care and Health Policy*, 18(6), 2865–2879. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.12272>

# References

- How sleep deprivation impacts mental health.* Columbia University Department of Psychiatry. (2022). <https://www.columbiapsychiatry.org/news/how-sleep-deprivation-affects-your-mental-health>
- Karg, N., Dorscht, L., Kornhuber, J., & Luttenberger, K. (2020). Bouldering psychotherapy is more effective in the treatment of depression than physical exercise alone: Results of a multicentre randomised controlled intervention study. *BMC Psychiatry*, 20(116), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12888-020-02518-y>
- Lamb, Dowrick, C., Burroughs, H., Beatty, S., Edwards, S., Bristow, K., Clarke, P., Hammond, J., Waheed, W., Gabbay, M., & Gask, L. (2015). Community Engagement in a complex intervention to improve access to primary mental health care for hard-to-reach groups. *Health Expectations : an International Journal of Public Participation in Health Care and Health Policy*, 18(6), 2865–2879. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hex.12272>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2022). *Brain basics: Understanding sleep.* National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke. <https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/public-education/brain-basics/brain-basics-understanding-sleep>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2022). *How sleep affects your health.* National Heart Lung and Blood Institute. <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/sleep-deprivation/health-effects>