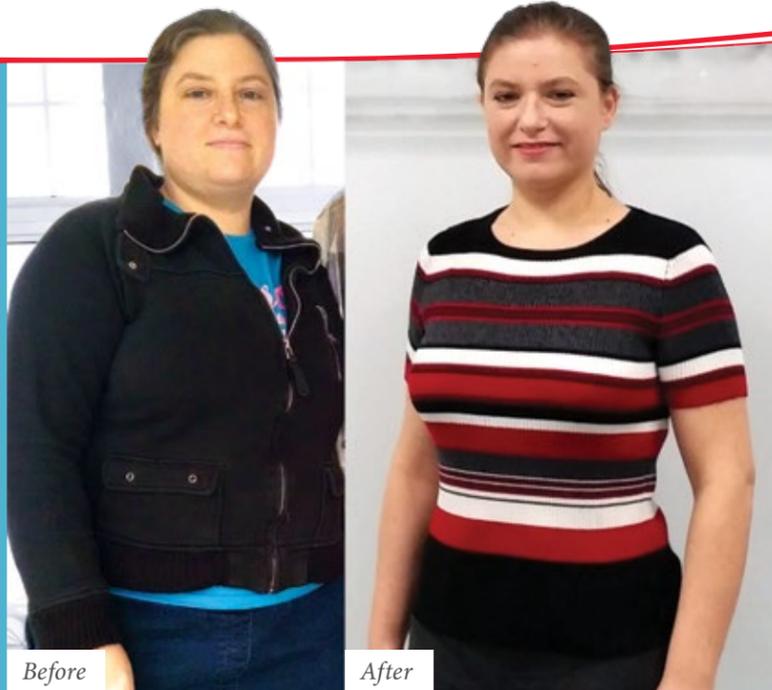


GOOD *for you*

Health and Wellness
for Magna Employees

Meet Ronna Hampton



Before

After

Preventative health is what inspired the 50 pound weight loss for Ronna Hampton, a Software Engineer at Magna T.E.A.M. Systems.

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Ronna tried many ‘fad diets’ in the past, but didn’t see the long-term health benefits she was hoping for. Yet, she didn’t give up!

She wanted to develop a plan that would allow her to incorporate more exercise into her life. However, trying to balance work, personal life, and life’s challenges while trying to start on a new diet and exercise plan, can often be very difficult. But Ronna found a way!

“I started exercising with a peddler (miniature stationary bike) under my desk (at work). Being able to exercise made a big difference for me. I found it extremely difficult to lose weight without exercising, and I had trouble finding time to consistently exercise until I found the peddler.”

Being able to use the peddler at work gave Ronna a new appreciation for exercise and the motivation she was looking for.

In addition to adding more exercise into her daily life, Ronna also made adjustments to what she was eating.

“I kept a food journal to monitor what I was eating. I aimed for 1700 – 1800 calories and 1 hr of exercise each day. I eat a lot more vegetables and fruits now. I also cut carbs and eat more lean protein such as – turkey, chicken, tofu, cottage cheese, protein drinks, yogurt, and eggs. I also often eat soups and salads.”

When starting a new diet, food journaling can be very helpful. It can give insight into what one is really

“

“Keep trying, don’t give up! Find the things that work for you and keep adding new ways to meet your goals.”

eating on a daily basis in terms of carbohydrates, fats, proteins, and sugars. It is a good tracking tool that can help change how people look at different foods; and as Ronna explains, there’s an app for that!

“In the beginning, I used an app – MyFitnessPal – to track my calories. Now I track calories with a spreadsheet and Google non-labeled food items for nutritional information.”

As one can see, improving health for the long-term does require effort and in some cases, requires a major lifestyle change. Through that change can also come many challenges.

“My biggest challenge was adjusting to much smaller portion sizes. I had to strictly control portion sizes until it came more naturally to me. Exercising helped me limit my calorie intake, as it reduced my appetite and food cravings,” Ronna stated.

Even though Ronna has faced some challenges in the last 11 months, she has also seen great success. Some of that success can be attributed to the support she has seen from her family and co-workers.

“My mother-in-law is (now) counting calories and exercising more, so we trade tips and recipes. Many of my coworkers have also complimented my weight loss success which helps motivate me. I’ve talked to several colleagues about healthy foods we like, recipes, exercising and other ideas to that facilitate a healthier lifestyle.”

Lauren Cool, Wellness Coordinator at T.E.A.M. Systems adds, “Ronna’s success has really inspired a lot of our employees here at T.E.A.M. Systems. There are quite a few employees that have seen Ronna’s transformation and have started using the peddlers not only at their desks at work, but also at home. Her story has sparked many conversations about health and wellness that has motivated people to begin their own weight loss journey.”

There are many diet and exercise tools that are on the market, but finding the right fit for you is key.

Ronna found her motivation in exercising with her bike peddler; and it has truly changed her life.

For those that might be struggling to find something that works, Ronna gave some words of advice, “Keep trying, don’t give up! Find the things that work for you and keep adding new ways to meet your goals.”

If you are interested in learning more about the desk peddlers (miniature stationary bike) you can find them at Amazon.com, Meijer, or your local sporting goods store. Models run between \$35-\$150 (USD). In Canada, find them at Staples, Walmart, or Amazon.ca.

Ronna Hampton

Magna T.E.A.M. Systems

Written by Lauren Cool, Wellness Coordinator, T.E.A.M. Systems



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QUIZ

Are you getting enough sleep?

Rate the following statements:

0 = Never 1= Sometimes 2= Often 3= Always

- I am tired in the morning
- I sleep through my alarm clock
- I need caffeine to help wake me up into morning
- I need to drink caffeine throughout the day to stay awake
- I have a difficult time concentrating on tasks
- I turn down social engagements because of fatigue
- I find it difficult to keep my eyes open when I am driving at night
- I fall asleep within 5 minutes of going to bed
- I forget things during the day
- I am irritable with family members and co-workers
- It takes me a longer time to get things done
- I experience mid-afternoon slumps

Add up all of your points to create a total score.

TOTAL SCORE:

Scoring Key:

0-9:

Congratulations on being well-rested!

10-24:

On your way to sleep deprivation

25-36:

Sleep deprived

Not getting enough sleep can have serious and detrimental effects on your health. Sleep deprivation can cause memory and cognitive impairment, impaired alertness, relationship stress, injury (occupational and automobile), fatigue, daytime sleepiness, health problems and a decrease in the general quality of life. Make your sleep hygiene a priority!

DID YOU KNOW?



Humans are the only mammal that willingly delay their sleep. Other mammals allow themselves to sleep when their bodies tell them to.



Noises interrupt sleep even if you do not fully wake up. While you sleep your brain continues to register and process sounds, a sudden change in sound can disrupt your sleep yet can be so brief that you don't even remember it in the morning.



Newborns sleep approximately 14-17 hours a day on an irregular schedule. Meanwhile, parents of a newborns can lose between 350-700 hours of sleep in their child's first year of life.



Humans can sleep with their eyes open. Select individuals are able to disengage their mind from the process of visual input and keep their eyes open while dozing off.



Altitude can disrupt sleep because of the changes in oxygen levels. Depending on the variation in altitude, it can take 2-3 weeks to adjust to new heights, which is why athletes often travel to competition venues to train in advance.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY *and* SLEEP

Regular physical activity can help you get the optimum night-time rest. But your sleep quality will depend on two important factors—intensity and time of day.

Studies have shown that moderate to vigorous workouts are a great way to start the day! Morning exercise can improve your overall mood. Mid-day or after-work exercises offer a fresh burst of energy and help work-off stress that builds up as your day progresses. Vigorous workouts will improve your overall sleep habits, but they're best avoided close to your bedtime hour. Exercising increases your body temperature and although you may feel tired, it takes your body time to return to a resting state.

RELAX-AND-UNWIND: EVENING EXERCISE

There is an exception to exercising right before bed! Low intensity yoga is a terrific way to relax your body and mind and can help improve the quality of sleep. If you're not familiar with yoga basics, please go to a yoga website, like yoga.com or yogajournal.com to find detailed instruction for each pose. You can often find affordable beginner/gentle yoga classes offered at your local gym, community center, or recreation complexes for those starting out.

Source: www.yogajournal.com, <https://yoga.com/poses>

TRY IT OUT

Here are 10 yoga poses that can be done at bedtime to promote a good night's sleep:



Wide-Leg Child's Pose



Relaxed Down Dog



Seated Heart Opener



Folded Butterfly



Pigeon



Seated Spinal Twist



Cobra



Legs up the Wall



Happy Baby



Eagle Twist

How to achieve **SUPER-SLEEP**



Do you have problems getting to sleep, staying asleep, or getting enough sleep? Your sleep schedule, bedtime habits, and day-to-day lifestyle choices are interrelated and getting a good night of rest can help improve and maintain productivity, emotional balance, and energy. Here are some simple tips that can help you achieve Super-Sleep.

DETERMINE CAUSE OF SLEEP DIFFICULTIES

Whether you struggle with getting to sleep, wake up in the night, or wake too early, you first must identify the root cause of the disturbance, then make a plan to combat them!

- Excess noise or light
- Temperature (too hot, too cold)
- Irregular sleeping hours
- Side effects from medication
- Indigestion caused by eating too close to bedtime
- Caffeine/smoking (stimulants)
- Alcohol intake (sleep disruptive)
- Breathing problems
- Uncomfortable mattress/pillow
- Improper napping
- Stress—this is a huge factor for many people. Keep reading for tips on how to combat this monster...

MANAGE STRESS LEVELS

During the evening, your levels of the stress hormone cortisol should naturally dip, calming your body in preparation for sleep. If your cortisol levels are still raised when you go to bed it will interfere with your ability to get a proper rest. High night-time cortisol levels also suppress the body's ability to release growth hormones for tissue repair and growth.

To reduce stress, try to include the following:

- Engage in regular physical activity, but not right before bedtime as it can have an opposite, stimulating effect.
- Avoid caffeine for at least 4 – 6 hours before bedtime. Caffeine, found in coffee, soda, chocolate and tea, can build up throughout the day, and depending on the amount consumed, can stay in the system for up to 12 hours. Try switching to decaffeinated coffee after dinner, and maybe save that portion of dark chocolate for mid-day, rather than indulge in the evening.
- Increase the amount of B vitamins in your diet as they help the body deal with stress. The B vitamins, folate, B6 and B12, can be found in bell peppers, spinach, broccoli, asparagus, lentils, and animal products like fish, poultry, eggs and dairy.
- Practice meditation, deep breathing, and positive self-talk at least once a day.
- Allow yourself to relax. At least an hour before your planned bedtime, write down the things you need to tackle the next day, then give yourself permission to mentally turn off. Take a bath, listen to soothing music or read a book. Avoid screens, including computer, video games, TV, and other sources with bright lights.

Stress hormones are also affected by the foods we eat.

Foods that raise blood sugar levels in the body quickly (have a high glycemic index) can cause hormone levels to rise, resulting in disrupted sleep. Skipping meals can also raise cortisol levels and should be avoided. Follow these tips to keep your blood-sugar levels in check.

- Eat regular, well-balanced meals throughout the day.
- Have protein-rich foods at each meal, including fish, eggs, lean meat, beans, or soy.
- Eat whole grains and avoid refined, processed, or sugary foods.
- Increase your vegetable intake and decrease consumption of juices.

Balance your minerals.

A lack of the minerals, specifically calcium and magnesium, can trigger or worsen sleep difficulties because they work together to calm the body and help relax nerves and muscles. Magnesium levels may be low if you are stressed, or consume too much sugar or alcohol

- Include calcium and magnesium-rich foods during evening meals, like leafy green vegetables, nuts, seeds and whole grains.

PRACTICE GOOD SLEEP HYGIENE

Create regular sleep-promoting habits and sleep regimes. Try these simple steps to have great sleep hygiene:



Keep the bedroom quiet, dark, and at a temperature that is comfortable for you. Install window blinds, wear ear-plugs, adjust the thermostat, and remove anything that may create disturbance.



Ensure the bed is only associated with sleeping and sex. Avoid watching TV, eating, playing video games in bed.



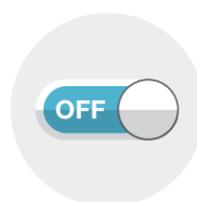
If you haven't fallen asleep within 20 minutes of going to bed, move to a dimly lit room and do something relaxing until you feel drowsy, then go back to bed. Continue this process until you fall asleep.



Wear comfortable clothing, or nothing at all.



Avoid big heavy evening meals.



Give yourself an hour to relax and mentally turn-off.

Cherry-Almond OVERNIGHT OATS PARFAIT



This makes a delicious breakfast or can even be served as a healthy, sleep-friendly dessert!

INGREDIENTS (1 serving)

- 1/3 cup** old-fashioned rolled oats
- 1/3 cup** plain Greek low-fat yogurt
- 1/3 cup** unsweetened, organic tart cherry juice
- 1 tsp** pure maple syrup (optional)
- a few drops** pure almond extract
- 1 cup** pitted & halved sweet cherries, preferably organic (frozen or fresh)
- 1** banana
- 1 tbsp** toasted sliced almonds

INSTRUCTIONS

1. The night before, peel and slice the banana, put them in a freezer-safe container and freeze overnight. In a separate container, combine oats, yogurt, cherry juice, maple syrup, and almond extract; stir well. Fold in 1/2 cup cherries, (reserve remaining 1/2 cup for later), cover, and refrigerate overnight.
2. In the morning, or just prior to serving, place the frozen banana slices in a food processor and puree until a soft-serve consistency forms. Add in the remaining 1/2 cup pitted & halves cherries and puree just until combined.
3. Stir the toasted almonds into the oats.
4. Layer the oats and cherry-banana soft serve in a glass.

Source: Healthy Food For Living at <http://www.healthyfoodforliving.com>

BEDTIME TRUE OR FALSE



- 1 SNACKING IS BAD!**
False: Snacking before bed isn't all bad. Your digestive system slows at bedtime and having a heavy meal can leave you feeling uncomfortable or cause indigestion come snooze-time. Large or heavy meals should be consumed at least 4 hours prior to bedtime. Closer to night-time, choose light, sleep-inducing snacks, like a banana and Greek yogurt, nut butter on a whole grain cracker, or chamomile tea and a 1/2 slice of whole grain toast.
- 2 LIMIT FLUIDS!**
True: Drinking your daily recommended amount of water is great for your health, but stop drinking fluids about 2 hours before bed to avoid having to make nocturnal trips to the bathroom.
- 3 ALCOHOL HELPS ME SLEEP!**
False: It might help you fall asleep faster but alcohol causes increased wakefulness, restless sleeps, headaches, nightmares and night sweats.
- 4 SMOKING HELPS ME RELAX!**
False: Nicotine is a stimulant. Avoid smoking to reduce sleep difficulties. Butt out at least 3 hours before bed.

Source: <http://health.clevelandclinic.org/2014/06/5-foods-that-help-you-sleep/>

MORE ON meditation!



Never tried meditating? Visit the Magna Wellness website for a 15 minute guided meditation video: magnawellness.ca/?t=health-videos

There are also a variety of meditation apps for your phone, tablet or computer that can help you focus, relax, de-stress or sleep. Look for free or "lite" versions to get you started. Here are a few suggestions:

- Relax Lite: Guided meditation
- Calm (visit calm.com)
- Headspace
- Stop, Breathe & Think (a Webby Award winner)
- Relax Melodies: Sleep Zen Sounds
- Sleep Easily by Shazzie

Read more about combating stress with meditation:

magnawellness.ca/?t=health-articles&id=8648

BACOPA MONNIERA: A Herb to Enhance your Memory



It is not uncommon to become more forgetful as we age. Remembering where we put the car keys or what we had for dinner 2 nights ago seems to become more difficult as the years go by.

Fortunately, research is now showing that a naturally occurring herb in India, Bacopa monniera, houses the potential to help us make the most of our memories.

An Australian study, involving 81 participants aged 55 and older, revealed that participants receiving a 300 mg per day extract of Bacopa monniera displayed significant improvements in learning new information and recalling this information at a later time.

These findings are consistent with traditional use and previous research.

Source: The Cochrane Library at <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com.ezproxy.cmcc.ca/o/cochrane/clcentral/articles/550/CN-00759550/frame.html>

We would love to hear from you!
Send your suggestions / comments to:

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