

Relaxing in a Hot Tub Can Help Ease Your Body into a Deeper Sleep

The National Sleep Foundation (NSF), a non-profit organization promoting sleep education, advocacy, and research, has declared March 30th National Sleep Awareness Day. According to a recent poll by the NSF, approximately 132 million Americans suffer from sleep disorders more than one a night a week. This number is on the rise as evidenced by the growing number of sleep disorder centers across the nation (approximately 3,000 in the U.S. today).

Sleep researchers believe that many cases of insomnia can be traced to the hectic, stressful lifestyles lived by basically healthy people. The results of sleep deprivation are varied and may cause battered nerves, grogginess, memory lapses, depression, and even erratic mood swings. Rather than reaching for over-the-counter sleeping aids, a simple solution to this dilemma may be relaxing in a hot tub before bedtime.

The Pool & Spa News magazine (July 1998) reported that a recent Gallup poll found bathing to induce sleep common among the 1,000 adults surveyed, and a Consumer Reports survey reported that readers with mild sleep disorders listed a warm bath as one of the most popular remedies.

According to Alice Cunningham, Co-owner of Olympic Hot Tub Company, a Seattle based retailer, soaking in the warm, calming waters of a hot tub not only helps you to unwind and relieve tension, but can also help you to obtain a better night's sleep.

Studies suggest that immersion in hot water (such as a hot tub which has a constant temperature) before bedtime can ease the transition into a deeper, more restful sleep. This may be due to a temperature shift since the body's core internal thermostat drops after leaving the water, which signals the body that it's time to sleep. Or, the sleep improvement may also be related to hot water's relaxing properties -- the buoyancy of water reduces body weight by approximately 90%, relieving pressure on joints and muscles creating the sensation of weightlessness. The hot, swirling water leaves you feeling both mentally and emotionally relaxed.

"An added benefit of a hot tub-induced sleep is that it's a natural remedy, unlike alternative sleeping aids such as prescription drugs, over-the-counter remedies and alcohol -- all of which can make you feel groggy and have other adverse side effects," said Cunningham.

In an effort to promote the use of hot water as an aid in obtaining a better night's sleep, Hot Spring Spas, the world's number one selling brand of portable spas, has formed a partnership with the National Sleep Foundation.

"Our manufacturer is committed to working the NSF to help support sleep research, community education programs and fundraising activities," said Cunningham.

Although once considered symbolic of the laid-back California lifestyle, the hot tub has come full circle and is now very much part of "mainstream" culture. Today there are more than three million Americans enjoy the therapeutic benefits of hot tubs in the privacy of their own homes. "With the hectic pace of life today, it has become increasingly difficult for people to find ways to unwind and relax," explained Cunningham. "Owning a hot tub definitely improves the quality of your daily life by providing a refuge to unwind from the complexities and concerns of the day."

In addition, many healthful benefits are derived from sophisticated, state-of-the-art hot tubs. The massaging action -- created by sending a combination of hot water and air through jet nozzles -- results in an energized stream of water that loosens knots of tension and can provide a variety of

therapeutic benefits including relaxing tired and aching muscles, easing arthritis pain, improving circulation, and increasing mental acuity.