Top Sleep Myths

1. **Sleep causes the body and brain to shut down.**
   This is not true. Some physiological processes actually become more active while you sleep. Secretion of certain hormones is boosted, and activity of the pathways in the brain needed for learning and memory, is heightened.

2. **Getting 1 hour less of sleep will not affect daytime functioning.**
   Every hour affects you. Getting slightly less sleep can affect your ability to think properly, respond quickly and can compromise cardiovascular health, energy balance and the ability to fight infections.

3. **Your body adjusts quickly to different sleep schedules.**
   This is false. Your biological clock makes you most alert during the daytime and most drowsy at night. You will naturally feel sleepy at nighttime.

4. **People need less sleep as they get older.**
   Older adults need as much sleep as anyone else, but they often get less sleep and feel less refreshed. This is because they spend less time in deep, restful stages of sleep and are more easily awakened.

5. **Extra sleep at night can cure problems from excessive daytime fatigue.**
   Some people sleep 8-9 hours a night but do not feel rested because the quality of their sleep was poor. Quality of sleep is just as important as quantity.

6. **You can make up for lost sleep during the week by sleeping in on weekends.**
   Sleeping in will never completely make up for lack of sleep.

7. **Naps are a waste of time.**
   Naps are restorative and help counter some of the impaired performance resulting from not getting enough sleep. Taking an hour nap before 3pm is a healthy habit.

8. **Snoring is normal.**
   Snoring is common but snoring on a regular basis can make you sleepy during the day and more susceptible to diabetes and heart disease.

9. **The main cause of insomnia is worry.**
   Persistent inability to fall asleep can be caused by a number of factors such as: medications, depression, anxiety, asthma, arthritis or other conditions.