

HELPING STUDENTS GET A BETTER NIGHT'S REST:

A SLEEP PROGRAM WITH APP & EMAIL VERSIONS

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OBJECTIVE

The Refresh program aims to help students at the University of Iowa increase the quality and quantity of their sleep and better understand how sleep impacts their overall success. The goal of this assessment project was to analyze effectiveness of this program for the 2019-2020 academic year.

BACKGROUND

According to the 2019 NCHA data, students at the University of Iowa (UI) and nationwide report sleep difficulties as one of the top 3 impediments to learning.¹⁻² Over 40% of UI students report problems with sleepiness during daytime activities, a number which has been steadily increasing over the past decade.¹ Sleep issues have been linked to a variety of concerns, including irritability, depression, fatigue, attention and concentration difficulties, and poor academic performance.³

Research is lacking on effective measures for improving sleep among college students. A study from 2011 assessed the Refresh program, which was based on Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia; it was found to be effective in improving sleep quality.⁴ UI Student Wellness has offered sleep programs for students since 2013 based on this research. The UI Refresh program has evolved over time, starting with email version only, then app option, and now with optional components like consultations and heart rate monitor checkout.

METHODS

Program Options

- 1 Email – 8 weeks
Includes weekly emails including daily sleep logs and information on physiology of sleep, relaxation, mindfulness, and cognitive strategies
- 2 App - powered by Sleepate – 4-12 weeks
Includes sleep monitoring, sound analysis, assessment, relaxation tools, smart alarm, educational videos and a personalized sleep improvement plan
Optional Add-ons
-In-person sleep consultations
-Heart rate monitor checkout



Marketing

mass emails, social media, campus partners (counseling, advising, health center), digital signage, flyering, tabling, events, wellness consultations and workshops

Evaluation

Insomnia Severity Index⁵ (pre & post)
PROMIS Sleep Disturbance Scale⁶ (pre & post)
Satisfaction questions (post)

RESULTS

Participation

Version	Registered	Completed Evaluation	Average Reported Participation Rate in Program Activities
Email	9	3 (33.3%)	53.3%
App	923	299 (32.4%)	53.2%
without consult	911	293 (32.2%)	61.7%
with consult	12	6 (50.0%)	53.0%

Outcomes

Paired sample t-tests were conducted among students who completed the evaluation. Results showed...

significant* reductions in...
↓ difficulty falling asleep
difficulty staying asleep
problems waking too early
noticeability of sleep problem to others
interference with daily functioning
worry/distress about sleep problem
problems with sleep
restless sleep
effort to get to sleep
worry/distress about not being able to fall asleep

significant* increases in...
↑ satisfaction with current sleep
pattern
sleep quality
refreshing sleep

*Changes significant at $p < .001$; combines data from both email and app participants who completed evaluation (n=302)

CONCLUSIONS

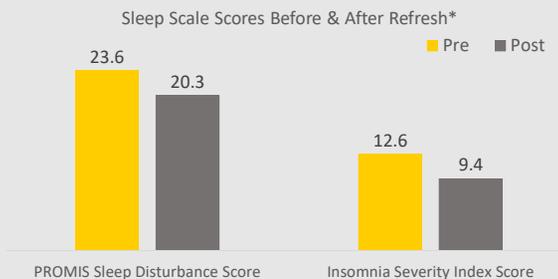
- ★ The Refresh program was effective in improving sleep among students
- ★ Students reported great satisfaction with the program
- ★ Not surprisingly, students greatly prefer to enroll in the app version of the program
- ★ Programs like this are a great way to reach many students in an individualized way, while still maintaining fairly low cost
- ★ Sleep programs are an important addition to college wellness programs, given sleep's impact on health and academic success.

REFERENCES

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What Students Thought

74.8% reported learning more about their sleep
73.3% agreed that the program motivated them to improve their sleeping habits
76.2% would recommend the program to a friend



THANKS

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