

Why Sleep?

While you sleep, your brain is hard at work forming the pathways necessary for learning and creating memories and new insights. Without enough sleep, you can't focus and pay attention or respond quickly. Recent studies reveal that people can learn and remember a task better if they are well rested than if they are sleep deprived.

A lack of sleep may also cause mood problems. Most people report being irritable, if not downright unhappy, when they lack sleep. People who chronically suffer from a lack of sleep, either because they do not spend enough time in bed or because they have an untreated sleep disorder, are at greater risk of developing depression.

Psychological stress can make it more difficult to fall asleep or stay asleep. People who feel stressed also tend to spend less time in deep sleep. Many people report having difficulties sleeping if, for example, they have recently lost a loved one, are dealing with family changes, or are under stress at school.

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HEALTHY SLEEP



Quality sleep is a vital part of maintaining good health and a vibrant life.

Healthy Sleep Tips

1.) Maintain a regular sleep schedule.

Our sleep-wake cycle is regulated by a “circadian clock” in our brain and the body’s need to balance both sleep and wake time. A regular waking time strengthens the circadian function and can help with getting to sleep at night.



2.) Establish a relaxing bedtime routine.

A relaxing bedtime routine can help prepare you for sleep. Avoid bright light or arousing activities such as studying, gaming, or paying bills before bedtime. Some studies suggest a hot bath helps you sink into deeper sleep, but it should be done early enough that you can cool off. It may be helpful to learn relaxation techniques from a counselor, trainer, or yoga teacher.

3.) Create an ideal environment.

Design your sleep environment to establish the conditions you need for sleep: cool, quiet, dark, comfortable and free of interruption.

4.) Sleep on a comfortable mattress & pillows.

Make sure your mattress is comfortable and supportive. Have comfortable pillows and make the room attractive and inviting for sleep.

5.) Use your bedroom only for sleep and sex.

It is best to take work materials, computers, and televisions out of the sleeping environment. Use your bed only for sleep and sex to strengthen the association between bed and sleep.



6.) Avoid caffeine close to bedtime.

Caffeine is a stimulant which means it can keep you awake. Caffeine products, such as coffee, tea, colas, and chocolate, remain in the body on average from 3 to 5 hours but can affect people for up to 12 hours.

7.) Avoid nicotine

Smoking before bed makes it more difficult to fall asleep. When smokers go to sleep, they experience withdrawal symptoms from nicotine, which may also cause sleep problems.

8.) Finish eating at least 2-3 hours before bed.

Eating or drinking too much may make you less comfortable when settling down for bed. It is best to avoid a heavy meal too close to bedtime. Also, spicy foods may cause heart-burn, which leads to difficulty falling asleep and discomfort during the night.

9.) Avoid alcohol close to bedtime.

Although many people think of alcohol as a sedative, it actually disrupts sleep, causing nighttime awakenings and less restful sleep.



10.) Exercise regularly.

In general, exercising regularly makes it easier to fall asleep. Late afternoon exercise is the perfect way to help you fall asleep at night.