

SLEEP IS THE FOUNDATION FOR HEALTHY HABITS

Adequate, quality rest each night is essential for good health. Sleep provides the foundation for all our daily habits and decisions. A lack of quality sleep can negatively impact our mood as well as our ability to focus on daily tasks. To maximize your sleep health, here are some tips you can follow:

- Even moderate exercise, such as walking, can help you sleep better. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate exercise three times a week or more. Just make sure you don't work out within three hours of bedtime.
- Alcohol and caffeine (found in coffee, tea, chocolate and some pain relievers) can interfere with sleep. If you have trouble sleeping, avoid caffeine eight hours before bedtime. Smokers should also avoid tobacco too close to bedtime.
- Dimming the lights in your bedroom and turning off all electronics about 30 minutes to an hour before bedtime can be very helpful to increase the release of melatonin. Melatonin is a hormone that helps regulate your body's internal circadian clock. It increases in the evening as it becomes dark, which helps induce sleep, and shuts down when it's light outside, which can then increase wakefulness and alertness.
- Indigestion from spicy or fatty food or having too much food in your stomach can cause insomnia. For a better night's sleep, eat light, simple foods at least three hours before bed.
- Stress and overstimulation can make it hard to fall asleep. Try to avoid intense television programs or movies before bed. Relax with a soothing, warm bath and curl up with a book instead.
- Create a comfortable sleep environment: try sleep shades, earplugs, a white-noise machine or all three. Also, make sure the room is not too warm; temperatures between 60 and 70 degrees are considered the most comfortable. Evaluate your mattress and pillows for proper comfort and support.

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- If you can't fall asleep or you wake up and can't get your mind to shut down, avoid watching the clock, which can create more anxiety. If you have been awake more than 20 minutes, get up, go to another room and do something relaxing to help you get drowsy. Keep the lights low, have some warm milk, read a book or write about whatever may be on your mind until your eyelids get heavy.
- Snoring, especially when accompanied by daytime fatigue, can be a sign of sleep apnea, a common disorder in which breathing repeatedly stops and starts as you sleep due to obstruction of your airway. Sleep apnea can leave you feeling exhausted during the day, can affect your mood and can even be dangerous to your health. If you are worried about sleep apnea, ask your primary care provider to refer you to a sleep specialist.

Sleep tips: 6 steps to better sleep

You're not doomed to toss and turn every night. Consider simple tips for better sleep, from setting a sleep schedule to including physical activity in your daily routine.

To improve sleep, consider these tips:

- **Stick to a Sleep Schedule:** Limit sleep to no more than eight hours, aiming for at least seven. Go to bed and wake up at the same time daily. If you can't sleep within 20 minutes, engage in a relaxing activity before returning to bed.
- **Monitor Food and Drink:** Avoid going to bed hungry or overly full; steer clear of large meals, nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol close to bedtime.
- **Create a Restful Environment:** Keep your bedroom cool, dark, and quiet. Limit light exposure and screen time before bed, using techniques like relaxation activities.
- **Limit Daytime Naps:** Keep naps under one hour and avoid late-day sleeping to not disrupt nighttime rest.
- **Include Physical Activity:** Regular exercise can enhance sleep quality but avoid vigorous activity close to bedtime.
- **Manage Worries:** Address concerns before bed by writing them down. Stress management techniques like meditation can help.

Consult a Healthcare Provider: If sleeplessness persists, seek medical advice to identify and address underlying issues.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/sleep/art-20048379>

GET A GOOD WEEKS SLEEP

DAILY ACTIONS	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Turn off all electronics one hour before bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do not use TV or electronics in the bedroom	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lower your thermostat a few degrees before bedtime	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do the same routine before bedtime, such as journal, read or meditate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get seven to eight hours of sleep	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, you're not alone. Many people struggle with sleep — and that's a problem since sleep plays a crucial role in your health, energy levels and ability to function at your best. This weeklong sleep activity can help you reset your sleep habits. We challenge you to work to incorporate these habits into your long-term daily routine.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF NAPPING

While closing your eyes for a few minutes during your busy day may seem like a good idea, it's important to consider the effects napping may bring. The time of day and length of time you nap can provide benefits or create problems. Knowing when to nap and providing yourself with a suitable napping environment will produce the greatest benefits.

Consider why you're napping

Before lying down to take a daily nap, you may want to consider why you began taking these naps. If you've been working the night shift or are a new parent, you probably have reason to be closing your eyes for a while. On the other hand, if you feel that a nap is essential to your daily functioning, you may have a bigger health problem that should be addressed with your healthcare team.

Talking to your healthcare team is the best way to find out why you're experiencing increased fatigue. The reasons for your exhaustion could be anything from having a sleep disorder, such as sleep apnea, to a side effect from a new medication.

Drawbacks to napping

1 Sleep inertia

Sleep inertia can involve waking up feeling groggy and disoriented after a nap. This can become a problem if you have places to be or tasks to complete after you wake up from your nap.

2 Nighttime sleep problems

Problems can arise if your naps are too long or close to bedtime. Try not to nap if you experience insomnia or poor sleep quality at night, as napping may worsen these problems. Short naps are the best when trying to avoid interference with nighttime sleep.

Benefits of napping

Taking naps can provide many benefits to your health, such as:

Improved mood

Quicker reaction time

Better memory

Increased alertness

Reduced fatigue

Enhanced relaxation

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF NAPPING

When to nap

Did you know there are certain times when a nap may be more beneficial to your health? Take a nap:

- If you're experiencing new fatigue, but monitor your symptoms and discuss any concerns with your health care team.
- If you're about to experience sleep loss, such as a long travel day or workday.
- If you want to make naps a part of your daily routine. In this situation, have a planned time of day and length of time to keep your schedule on track.

Best way to nap

Here are four tricks to make your naps more effective:

1. Set aside an allotted amount of time.

If you wake up feeling groggy after a nap, you're sleeping too long. The ideal nap length is between 15 and 30 minutes.

2. Plan to take naps in the afternoon.

The ideal time to nap is around 2 p.m. or 3 p.m. This is because you're likely to experience a lower level of alertness or sleepiness following lunch. You're also more likely to avoid interference with nighttime sleep if you nap around this time. However, some people may adjust their napping times to fit their work or school schedules.

3. Create a tranquil environment.

Some people struggle to sleep during the day, but there are actions you can take to help you become more relaxed. Eliminate distractions when napping, so turn off any screens, such as your phone. Find a quiet space with minimal light to improve your naps. Adjusting the room temperature to what is comfortable for you also can make your space more comfortable.

4. Give yourself time to wake up.

Allowing yourself enough time to wake up before resuming activities after your nap is important, as you may feel groggy or less alert.

<https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org/hometown-health/speaking-of-health/how-to-get-the-most-out-of-napping>