

## There are different kinds of sleep disorders

In addition, there are many different kinds of sleep disorders that can prevent a good night's sleep. One of the most common is insomnia in which it can be difficult to fall asleep and stay asleep.

Sleep apnea in which breathing stops many times during the night, often due to an upper airway obstruction, also robs many people (and their partners!) of a good night's sleep. The tip-off? Snoring.

Do you have symptoms of sleep apnea? Take this sleepiness test to find out whether you are likely to doze off when you're not supposed to.


## Ten tips for a good night's sleep

Despite the fact that there are many situations that can stand between you and your requisite number of zzzs for good health, there are a lot of things you can do to increase the likelihood of a restful, restorative night's sleep:

1. **Establish a sleep/wake pattern** by getting up at the same time every morning - regardless of when you went to bed.
2. **Get 30 minutes of some form of exercise** such as brisk walking, every day. (Be aware, however, that too much activity late in the evening can stimulate the body and make it difficult to fall asleep.)
3. **Keep your bedroom dark, quiet and cool** - ideally 18 degrees centigrade.
4. **Don't watch TV in bed**, which can leave your mind racing.
5. **Reading before bed is relaxing** and can induce drowsiness.
6. **Stay away from caffeine-containing beverages** such as coffee, tea and some colas before bed. You may fall asleep but find yourself wide awake at 2 a.m.!
7. **Avoid smoking**, as chronic tobacco use disturbs sleep.
8. **Avoid eating a heavy meal before bedtime** as digestive processes will make it difficult to get a restful sleep.
9. **A small snack of some carbohydrate can help** induce sleep. A not-too-sugary cookie, for instance, and a glass of warm milk, known to contain the sleep-inducing amino acid tryptophan, is a good pre-sleep choice.
10. **Take a relaxing warm bath** in the evening before going to bed

Finally, if you can't sleep, don't fight it. Get up and read in another room until you feel drowsy.

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 *Kristin Jenkins is a writer and editor who specializes in health and medicine.*

## Media Zone

### Sleepy Stats

- **Nightly ZZZZ's.** The average adult needs between seven and eight hours of sleep a night (though individuals may range from five to 10 hours)
- **Dr. Mattress at Your Service.** Your mattress is more than a piece of furniture in your home; it directly contributes to your health and well-being.
- **Say So-Long to Snoring.** Getting enough sleep means that you wake up without an alarm clock (your body wakes you naturally).
- **The Power of Sleep.** Healthy sleep has been empirically proven to be the single most important determinant in predicting longevity, more influential than diet, exercise or heredity.
- **Fall Back.** When we gain an hour of sleep in the Fall, there is a decrease in the number of traffic accidents of approximately seven per cent.
- **Comfy and Cozy.** If upon waking we have aches and pains that dissipate after two or three hours, the chances are that our bed is to blame. Research has shown that simply by changing from an uncomfortable bed to a comfortable one, an individual will stir less and sleep longer.
- **Keep it Fresh.** The material in most mattresses will have deteriorated by up to 75% after ten years of use.

### Golden Rules of Sleep:

- Get an adequate amount of sleep every night – identify the amount of sleep you need to be fully alert all day long and get that amount every night.
- Establish a regular sleep schedule – go to bed at the same time every night and wake up without an alarm clock at the same time every morning, including weekends.
- Get continuous sleep – six hours of good solid sleep is often more restorative than eight hours of poor, fragmented sleep – ask any parent of a newborn baby.
- Make up for lost sleep – pay back your sleep debt in a timely fashion. Make up for any lost sleep as soon as possible.

## **Good Sleep** **An Essential Part of a Healthy Lifestyle**

Like proper nutrition and exercise, sleep is essential to making you feel your best. Our bodies can't survive without food and water, and just the same, our bodies will suffer if not refueled with the right amount of sleep. On average, adults need between seven and eight hours of sleep a night – but, individual needs may range from five to 10 hours.

Many people underestimate how vital sleep is to maintaining good health and well-being. When you sleep, your body begins its job of consolidating the day's learning into memory and improving your ability to absorb and remember everyday skills. It is also the time when your body renews and rejuvenates itself – the blood supply to our muscles increases during sleep allowing the body to recover from the physical stresses of the day. A good night's sleep also helps to re-energize and to prepare for the day ahead.

### **What happens if you don't get enough sleep?**

Think not getting a good night's sleep just means you'll be tired and cranky the next day? Think again. While you may never experience the severe consequences of suffering from a sleep disorder, even everyday sleep debt can affect the quality of your life. Sleep loss affects performance. If you don't get enough sleep, here's what can happen to you:

- **Daytime drowsiness** – Loss of energy and alertness, likely in the mid-afternoon.
- **Mood changes** – Often one of the first things to be affected by sleep deprivation. Not getting the right amount of sleep can cause depression, irritability and loss of sense of humour.
- **Stress and anxiety** – Feelings of frustration, nervousness and anxiety are often increased due to lessened ability to cope with day-to-day stresses.
- **Weight gain** – Inadequate amounts of sleep can cause hormonal and metabolic changes in our bodies that lead to weight gain. As well, fatigue during the day caused by lack of sleep often drives people to consume food and beverages high in sugar to help keep them awake.
- **Immune system** – Sleep deprivation lowers the immune system making us more susceptible to colds and flu throughout the year.
- **Productivity** – Lack of quality sleep can cause problems with concentration, memory, thinking logically and critically and even clear communication – all of which contribute to overall productivity.

## **Better Sleep Guide**

### **15 Great Sleep Strategies**

- 1. Sleep on a comfortable and supportive mattress and foundation.** It's difficult to sleep on a bed that is too small, too soft, too hard or too old.
- 2. Exercise.** Exercise increases heart and lung fitness, reduces stress, anxiety and insomnia. But try not to exercise within three hours of bedtime. The adrenaline released through exercise can keep you awake.
- 3. Keep mentally stimulated during the day.** Boredom can cause loss of sleep.
- 4. Eat a balanced diet.** Don't eat a large or heavy meal within four or five hours of going to bed. Also, avoid food that can cause indigestion.
- 5. Stop smoking.** Nicotine is a stimulant and makes it harder to fall asleep.
- 6. Reduce caffeine intake.** Avoid drinks such as coffee, tea or soft drinks within six hours of bedtime.
- 7. Avoid alcohol.** Drinking alcohol before bedtime can cause disturbed and shallow sleep.
- 8. Take a warm bath.** The warm water sends blood away from the brain to the surface of the skin to make you feel relaxed and drowsy.
- 9. Relaxing bedroom atmosphere.** Make sure your bedroom is associated with pleasure and rest-not stress and tension.
- 10. Establish a sleep ritual.** Doing the same things each night just before signals your body to settle down for the night.
- 11. Avoid trying too hard to get to sleep.** The more pressure you put on yourself, the harder it will be to fall asleep.
- 12. Unwind early in the evening.** Try to deal with worries and distractions several hours before bedtime.
- 13. Keep regular hours.** Manage your internal clock by going to bed and waking up at the same time every day- even on weekends.
- 14. Get the temperature right.** As a guide, 16 degrees Celsius is generally conducive to a restful sleep while temperatures above 24 degrees Celsius are more likely to cause restlessness.
- 15. Dress for the part.** For maximum sleep comfort, wear loose fitting nightwear made from natural fabrics such as cotton, wool or silk.

# A Guide to Better Sleep

## Make Your Bedroom a Restful Place to Sleep

There should be no reason to settle for anything less than a perfect sleep. Your bedroom should be quiet and relaxing. Unwelcome noise or light, an uncomfortable or worn-out mattress and foundation, a room that is too warm or too cold can prevent you from getting the comfortable sleep that your body needs.

## Make Your Bedroom a Haven for Sleep

Is your bedroom conducive to a good night's sleep?

Here are some factors that make a difference:

- **Mattress and foundation** – Be sure your mattress and foundation meet your needs for both comfort and support. If you sleep with a partner, your mattress should allow both of you enough space to move easily.
- **Light** – Light is one of the body's most powerful time cues. The rising sun can wake up the brain long before the alarm goes off. A dark room is the most conducive for sleep – both day or night.
- **Noise** – Sudden, loud noises from inside or outside the home can disrupt sleep. However, steady, low-pitched sounds, such as the hum of a fan or air conditioner can be soothing because they help block out distracting noises.
- **Temperature** – The ideal bedroom temperature is 16 to 18 degrees Celsius (60 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit) A room that is too warm or too cool can deter you from getting a comfortable sleep.

# A Guide to Better Sleep

## The Science of Sleep

You spend one-third of your life sleeping! This time has a profound effect on the other two-thirds of your life. The amount and quality of the sleep you get affects your alertness, energy, mood, body weight, perception, memory, thinking, reaction time, productivity, performance, communication skills, creativity, safety and good health.

### Does sleep have a direct impact on our health?

Most definitely. Sleep plays a large role in numerous aspects of our health and well-being. That's why consistently getting a good night's sleep is so important.

Here are just a few examples of the health benefits of sleep:

- **Blood supply** to our muscles increases during deep sleep, allowing the body to recover from the physical stresses of the day.
- **Body temperature** is turned down in deep sleep, thereby conserving energy.
- **Metabolic activity** is reduced while we sleep, providing an opportunity for tissue growth and repair.
- **Natural immune-system modulators** increase during sleep, hence modest loss of sleep reduces the body's immune responses and your resistance to viral infection. You may get more colds, flu and respiratory tract infections when you do not get enough sleep.
- **Intensive firing of neurons** during REM sleep is thought to be responsible for aiding memory storage and retrieval as well as reorganizing and categorizing information.

## A Guide to Better Sleep

### Four R's to a Restful Night's Sleep:

**Regularize** your sleep-wake patterns. Get up at the same time daily. Avoid naps unless they are regular. Try to sleep the same amount each night. Find the perfect amount of sleep time for you and stick with it.

**Ritualize** cues for good sleep. Keep the environment quiet, dark, cool and safe for sleeping. Go to bed only when you are sleepy.

**Relax.** Find ways to reduce stress and control tension. Learn some relaxation techniques.

**Resist behaviours** that interfere with sleep: keep away from alcohol, tobacco and caffeine. Avoid strenuous exercise within three hours of bedtime and avoid heavy meals before bed.

## Sleep IQ Test

The following statements will test how much you know about sleep. Please select **True** or **False** for each statement...and be sure to check your answers with the next page.

1. During sleep, your brain rests.
2. You cannot learn to function normally with one or two fewer hours of sleep a night than you need.
3. Boredom makes you sleepy, even if you have had enough sleep.
4. Resting in bed with your eyes closed cannot satisfy your body's need for sleep.
5. Snoring is not harmful as long as it doesn't disturb others or wake you up.
6. Everyone dreams at night.
7. The older you get, the fewer hours of sleep you need.
8. Most people don't know when they are sleepy.
9. Raising the volume of your radio will help you stay awake while driving.
10. Sleep disorders are mainly due to worry or psychological problems.
11. Most sleep disorders go away even without treatment



## Sleep IQ Test Answers

1. **FALSE.** While your body rests, your brain doesn't. An active brain during sleep prepares us for alertness and peak functioning the next day.
2. **TRUE.** Sleep need is biological. While children need more sleep than adults, how much sleep any individual needs is genetically determined. Most adults need eight hours of sleep to function at their best. How to determine what you need? Sleep until you wake on your own...without an alarm clock. Feel rested? That's your sleep need. You can teach yourself to sleep less, but not to need less sleep.
3. **FALSE.** When people are active, they usually don't feel sleepy. When they take a break from activity, or feel bored, they may *notice* that they are sleepy. However, what causes sleepiness most is sleep loss: **not getting the sleep you need.** Adults who don't get enough good sleep feel sleepy when they're bored. Boredom, like a warm dark room, doesn't cause sleepiness, it *merely unmasks* it.
4. **TRUE.** Sleep is as necessary to health as food and water and rest is no substitute for sleep. When you don't get the sleep you need, your body builds up a sleep debt. Sooner or later, this debt must be paid...with sleep.
5. **FALSE.** Snoring may indicate the presence of a life-threatening sleep disorder called *sleep apnea*. People with sleep apnea snore loudly and arouse repeatedly during the night, gasping for breath. These repeated awakenings lead to severe daytime sleepiness, which raises the risk for accidents and heart problems. Yet 95% of those with sleep apnea remain **unaware** they have a serious sleep disorder. With treatment, patients can reduce their risk for accidents and health problems.
6. **TRUE.** Though many people fail to remember their dreams, dreaming does normally occur for every person, every night. Dreams are most vivid during REM or Rapid Eye Movement sleep.
7. **FALSE.** Sleep need remains unchanged throughout adulthood. Older people may wake more frequently through the night and sleep less, but their sleep need is no less than during young adulthood. When older people sleep less at night, they tend to sleep more during the day. Sleep difficulties are not a normal part of aging, although they are all too common. If poor sleep habits, pain or health conditions make sleeping difficult, a physician can help.

8. **TRUE.** Most people don't know when they are sleepy. Researchers have asked thousands of people over the years if they are sleepy, only to be told no...just before the individuals fell asleep! What does this mean? Many people don't know *if* they are sleepy, *when* they are sleepy, or *why* they are sleepy. When driving, don't think you can tough it out if you're sleepy but only a few miles from your destination. If you're sleepy enough, you can fall asleep...*anywhere*.
9. **FALSE.** If you're having trouble staying awake while driving the only short-term solution is to pull over at a safe place, and take a short nap or have a caffeinated drink. Doing both-for example, drinking coffee, then napping before the caffeine kicks in-may be even better. However, the only long-term solution is prevention...starting out well rested after a good night's sleep. Research shows that loud radios, chewing gum and open windows fail to keep sleepy drivers alert.
10. **FALSE.** Stress is the number one reason people report *insomnia* (difficulty falling or staying asleep) However, stress accounts for only a fraction of the people who suffer either *chronic insomnia* or difficulty staying alert during the day. Sleep disorders have a variety of causes. *Sleep apnea*, for example, is caused by airway obstruction during sleep. *Narcolepsy*, which is characterized by severe daytime sleepiness and sudden sleep attacks, appears to be genetic. No one knows yet what causes *restless legs syndrome*, in which creepy, crawly feelings arise in the legs and are relieved, momentarily, by motion.
11. **FALSE.** Unfortunately, many people who suffer from sleep disorders don't realize that they have a disorder or that it can be treated. But sleep disorders don't disappear without treatment. Treatment may be behavioral (for example, going to sleep and waking at the same time every day, scheduling naps or losing weight), pharmacological (involving medication), surgical or a combination. Untreated sleep disorders may have serious negative effects, worsening quality of life, school and work performance and relationships. Worse, untreated sleep disorders may lead to accidents and death.

## Sleep Test

### How Large is Your Sleep Debt?

The following questionnaire is designed to determine whether you have a sleep deficit. Answer each question by selecting **yes** or **no**.

1. Do you usually need a loud alarm clock to wake you up in the morning?  
Yes                      No
2. Do you usually hit the snooze button to get a few minutes more of sleep when the alarm goes off in the morning?  
Yes                      No
3. Do you find it to be a struggle to get out of bed in the morning?  
Yes                      No
4. Do you often get sleepy after a large meal or from drinking a small amount of alcohol?  
Yes                      No
5. Do you sleep longer on weekends than you normally do during the week?  
Yes                      No
6. Do you often fall asleep within five minutes of getting into bed?  
Yes                      No
7. Do you find that it is more difficult to attend to details or routine chores than it used to be?  
Yes                      No
8. Do you sometimes have trouble concentrating and remembering?  
Yes                      No
9. Do you sometimes find yourself getting very sleepy or dozing off when you are watching TV or reading?  
Yes                      No
10. Do you often fall asleep while relaxing after dinner?  
Yes                      No
11. When you're a passenger on an airplane, car, bus or train and the trip lasts over an hour without a break, do you commonly find yourself getting very sleepy or dozing off?  
Yes                      No
12. Do you tend to get sleepy when you are sitting quietly at a public meeting, lecture or in a theatre?  
Yes                      No
13. Have you sometimes found yourself getting extremely sleepy with the urge to doze when you drive and are stopped for a few minutes in traffic?  
Yes                      No
14. Do you drink more than four cups of coffee or tea (containing caffeine) during the day? (Remember to count refills; also count extra large take-out cups as two cups)  
Yes                      No
15. Do you often need a nap to get through the day?  
Yes                      No

A simple way to interpret your scores on the questionnaire is this: With scores above 7 you will begin to notice the effects of your sleep debt in terms of reduced efficiency and feelings of well-being. With scores above 12 your reduced effectiveness and changes in your disposition and mood will also be quite apparent to other people, including fellow workers and family members.

## **A Guide to Better Sleep**

### **Sleep Debt: You Can Bank On It**

#### **What is Sleep Debt?**

Each of us maintains a personal sleep bank account. Any sleep we get is a deposit to the account; any hour of wakefulness is a withdrawal from the account. Most people need to deposit at least eight hours of sleep into their account to cancel the debt incurred by sixteen hours of continuous alertness.

Some of the ways that can cause you to accumulate a sleep debt are depriving yourself of sleep by missing a night's sleep; staying up late for a few nights in a row; waking up several times during the night (due to noises, an uncomfortable mattress, a baby, etc).

You can find clues in your everyday lifestyle to determine if you need to catch up on your sleep – just to name a few – itching or burning eyes, craving unhealthy high-fat and high-carb foods, mood changes, reduced thinking abilities and mental efficiency and poor memory processing. If you are feeling that you are sleep deprived or may have a serious sleep problem, consult your doctor or a sleep specialist.