



Reduce Stress

While a certain amount of stress can help us stay alert and do our best, too much stress can interfere with our ability to sleep. If stress is making it difficult for you to get the sleep you need, these tips may help.

Talk things out

Share your concerns and problems with people you trust. Talking things out helps put things in perspective.

Make To Do lists

If you are the type of person who lies awake thinking of all the things you need to do, make a list before you go to bed. This will allow you to put the next day's tasks aside.

Practice relaxation techniques

- ▶ **Deep breathing** – Take long, slow deep breaths. Inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth.
- ▶ **Visualization** – Image yourself in a calm, quiet, peaceful place.
- ▶ **Muscle relaxation** – Starting at the top of your head, tense, and then relax each group of muscles.

Sleep Facts

- ▶ REM (rapid eye movement) is the lightest stage of sleep. REM makes up 20% – 25% of our sleep. Most dreaming takes place during REM sleep.
- ▶ Experts say that one of the biggest sleep distractions is the 24-hour accessibility of the internet.
- ▶ Studies show that being sleepy while driving can be more dangerous than driving under the influence of alcohol.
- ▶ Three common sleep problems are insomnia, snoring, and sleep apnea.
 - Insomnia* is the inability to fall asleep and/or stay asleep. Up to 30% of teens and young adults suffer from occasional insomnia.
 - Snoring* happens when the flow of air through the mouth and nose is obstructed.
 - Sleep apnea* causes people to pause their breathing during their sleep.
- ▶ While most people dream in color, some people dream only in black and white.
- ▶ We spend about 1/3 of our lives sleeping.

“A good laugh and a long sleep are the two best cures for anything.”

Irish proverb



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Sleep Well



Sleep Well



To be healthy and feel good, it is essential that you get enough sleep!

When you are well rested, you

- ▶ have more energy
- ▶ can handle stress better
- ▶ are more alert and able to focus
- ▶ have a more positive outlook
- ▶ have a stronger immune system
- ▶ look and feel refreshed

Teens and young adults need eight to nine hours of sleep each night. With their busy schedules, it's not surprising that many don't get enough sleep.

If you aren't getting enough sleep because you have too much to do, see if there is something you can eliminate or postpone. Sleep is too important to sacrifice!

Sleep Tips

Some people have a difficult time falling and staying asleep. If you're one of these people, here are some tips to help you get the sleep you need.

Food and Drink

- ▶ Avoid energy drinks and caffeinated products (e.g., soft drinks, coffee, tea), especially in the evening.
- ▶ Don't go to bed hungry, but don't eat a lot before you go to bed either. Small amounts of milk, fruit, or chamomile tea may help induce sleepiness.



Activities

- ▶ Don't study or play computer games within one hour of going to bed. Take this hour to relax. Do some light stretching, listen to soft music, take a hot bath, or read a book.
- ▶ Get 30 – 60 minutes of exercise at least four times a week, but don't exercise within three hours of going to bed. This is when your body needs to be winding down.
- ▶ Have a regular bedtime routine. Doing the same thing each night will teach your body that it's time to slow down.

Sleep Tips

Your Bedroom

- ▶ Keep your bedroom at 68 – 71 degrees.
- ▶ Turn everything off 30 minutes before going to bed (computer, phone, iPad). Make your bedroom dark and quiet. If there is too much light, put dark shades on your windows or wear a sleep mask. If there's noise, wear earplugs.

Falling Asleep

- ▶ Keep a regular sleep/wake cycle on weekdays and weekends. Try not to vary it more than one hour. If you sleep until noon on Sunday, you're likely to have a hard time getting to sleep Sunday night.
- ▶ If you take daytime naps, limit them to 30 minutes.
- ▶ Don't let yourself fall asleep before you get into bed. If you fall asleep in a chair watching TV, getting back to sleep might be difficult.
- ▶ If you have a hard time "turning your mind off" once you are in bed, use thoughts with rhythm or repetition to help clear your mind (e.g., count backwards from 500 or repeat a word or phrase).
- ▶ Avoid over-the-counter sleeping pills. If sleep problems persist, speak to your doctor about prescription sleep aids.

