

The importance of Sleep

A good night's sleep is just as important as regular exercise and a healthy diet.

Research shows that poor sleep has immediate negative effects on hormones, exercise performance, and brain function. It can also cause weight gain and increase disease risk in both adults and children. In contrast, good sleep can help you eat less, exercise better, and be healthier.



Benefits of a good night's sleep:

- Get sick less often
- Stay at a healthy weight
- Lower your risk for serious health problems, like diabetes and heart disease
- Reduce stress and improve your mood
- Think more clearly and do better in school and at work
- Get along better with people
- Make good decisions and avoid injuries

Techniques to promote sleep and overall quality:

- **Exercise-** boosts natural sleep hormone, melatonin, but try not to, too close to bedtime
- **Keep bedroom for sleeping-** Avoid working or watching tv within your bedroom and reserve your bed for a calming area to sleep only.
- **Keep it comfortable-** A dark, cool, and quiet environment all promotes sleep.
- **Create a bedtime routine-** Routine allows body to recognize its time to sleep, create a simple bedtime routine including activities such as reading, warm cup of tea, brushing teeth
- **Eat but not too much or too little-** a grumbly stomach or overstuffed can be distracting to quality of sleep
- **Avoid alcohol and caffeine-** These are stimulants that can disrupt quality of sleep try
- **De-stress-** stress is a stimulant that activities fight or flight response which fights the bodies want to sleep. This can be done by breathing techniques or



meditation

- **Meditation:** Meditation aids in the relaxation of the whole body, which helps quiet some of those stressful thoughts. Meditation can help reduce cortisol levels, which is the stress hormone, while also increasing natural melatonin levels improving sleep.
- **Reduce blue light exposure-** Exposure to blue light late in the evening can trick the brain into thinking it is still daylight which can interrupt the natural circadian rhythm, interfering with the body's natural production of melatonin. So try to turn off the tv and cell phones twenty minutes before bed.

The impacts of not enough sleep:

- Increased risk of car accidents
- Trouble thinking and concentrating
- High blood pressure
- Risk of heart disease
- Weakened immune system
- Risk for diabetes

WHAT TOO LITTLE SLEEP DOES TO YOUR BODY

Colds. A study of 164 healthy people found that those who slept <5 hours per night were more likely to get a cold compared to those who slept 7+ hours, regardless of demographics and weight.

Tummy troubles. Not sleeping can make the symptoms of **Inflammatory Bowel Disease** and acid reflux worse and may put you more at risk of developing IBD and **inflammatory bowel syndrome**.

Difficulty learning. Sleep deprivation interferes with our ability to remember and process new information. Researchers recommend **pushing back** early work and school start times to help ensure we get **enough sleep**.

Irritability and mood swings. Researchers found that interruptions and disturbances tend to **bother us more** when we haven't slept.

Headaches and migraines. Research links **poor sleep quality** to migraines and sleep apnea to headaches.

Depleted sex drive. Getting enough sleep is important for promoting **healthy sexual desire** and **genital response**. It also appears to play a role in **how often** we engage in sexual activity with our partners.

Poor vision. Sleep deprivation is linked with **tunnel vision**, **double vision**, and **dimness**. The longer you're awake, the more **visual errors** you'll see and the more likely you are to **hallucinate**.

Weight gain. When we don't get enough shut-eye, researchers found, we also tend to snack more and pick **calorie-rich foods** over lighter ones—especially for kids.

Tips and Resources:

Youtube Sleep Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2K4T9HmEhWE>

CDC Guidelines: https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about_sleep/sleep_hygiene.html

Sleep Blog: <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/17-tips-to-sleep-better>

Scholarly Article: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6281147/>



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