

✓ **Your daytime habits:**

- Avoid caffeine after noon. It's a stimulant that can keep you awake.
- Exercise early in the day to avoid overstimulation at bedtime.
- Stop eating 2-3 hours before bedtime. Digestion can keep you from falling asleep.
- Avoid alcohol. It negatively affects your quality of sleep.
- Keep naps early and short. Studies have shown the best time for a nap is around 2 p.m. And the best length is around 20 minutes.

KEEP IN MIND

Follow these tips, and within a few weeks, you should see an improvement in your sleep. If you have chronic sleep issues, talk with your primary care doctor or reach out to your EAP for further help.



Better Sleep for Better Wellbeing
Health & Wellness

Better Sleep
for Better
Wellbeing

Sleep deprivation is linked to multiple physical and mental health problems.

Did you know humans are the only mammals who willingly postpone sleep? Apparently, we're the only ones who don't fully understand the need for—and benefits of—a quality set of zzzz's.

GOING WITHOUT SLEEP

While staying awake may be a perk (and ultimately a detriment) of being part of the human race, it should be reserved for emergency situations only. Not getting enough sleep can:

- deplete your energy
- decrease your productivity
- contribute to weight gain
- put you at risk for other diseases

HOW MUCH SLEEP IS ENOUGH?

The National Sleep Foundation has provided the following recommendations for the number of hours we need each day:

- Newborn through preschoolers: 10-17
- School-age children: 9-11
- Teens: 8-10
- Adults over 18: 7-9

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR SLEEP HYGIENE

Many of us are exhausted and wonder why we can't sleep. Below are helpful habits that can optimize the quantity and quality of your sleep.

✓ Your environment:

- Choose the highest quality mattress, pillows, and bedding you can afford. It really does matter.
- Use black-out curtains or a sleep mask to keep out light. Light tells our bodies we're supposed to be awake.
- Cut or drown out noise with a ceiling fan, ear plugs, or a white noise machine. Natural sounds (waterfalls, wind, birds) help us sleep better.
- Set your thermostat at a pleasant temperature. Err on the cooler side. You're more likely to wake up if you're too hot.
- Experiment with soothing aromas, like lavender, in your room.

✓ Your sleep habits:

- Just as you set money aside for other important things, like food and rent, budget time for sleep.
- When planning your sleep schedule, add time to wind down. About 30-45 minutes before bed unplug from electronics, listen to soft music, drink herbal tea, or take a hot bath.
- Save your bed for sleep only. Doing non-sleep related things, such as working, scrolling through social media, or eating, causes your brain to relate bed to work, play, or food. Dedicate your bed to sleep, and your brain will eventually get the message.