Sleep Health

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF Lifestyle Medicine

Sleep is really important for our health. Not getting enough sleep or having interrupted sleep can make you feel tired, have trouble focusing, be less social, feel down, get less deep sleep, burn fewer calories, feel hungrier, and not perform as well. If you're having trouble sleeping, talk to your healthcare team about whether you might need a sleep study or therapy for insomnia (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, CBTi).

Sleep Disrupters

- Too much food or drink close to sleep time
- Blue light from phone/computer/television screen
- Caffeine and alcohol use
- Stress/anxiety/worry
- Certain noises/sounds
- Temperature (too hot or too cold)
- Lack of daytime sunlight exposure
- Medications and medical conditions
- Bed partner and/or pets

Tips for Better Sleep

- Establish a regular sleep schedule (same sleep and wake times)
- Minimize/eliminate bedroom noise and lights
- Increase daytime exposure to sunlight
- Move at least every hour during the day
- Eliminate nighttime caffeine and limit daytime caffeine
- Avoid alcohol within 3 hours of bedtime
- Avoid high-sodium foods close to bedtime
- Eliminate/limit after-dinner and late-night snacking
- Maintain a healthy BMI
- Stay hydrated during the day
- Use cognitive behavioral therapy for treatment of insomnia
- Increase exercise to 150 minutes of moderate intensity per week
- Include more whole food plant-based dietary choices
- Increase meditation techniques

Recommendations for Optimal Sleep

Infants 4 months to 12 months:
12 to 16 hours per 24 hours

Children 1 to 2 years of age:
11 to 14 hours per 24 hours (including naps)

Children 3 to 5 years of age:
10 to 13 hours per 24 hours (including naps)

Children 6 to 12 years of age:
9 to 12 hours per 24 hours

Teenagers 13 to 18 years of age:
8 to 10 hours per 24 hours

Adults:
7-9 hours of sleep per 24 hours



Sleep Management Goals

Setting goals around sleep health is a great way to increase your sleep quality. It's often easier to achieve positive goals. An example of a positive sleep goal is, "I will begin a new bedtime routine of shutting off the television and instead, reading a book for at least 30 minutes before bed, four nights this week."

Specific - What would you like to change?

Measurable - How much will you add or subtract?

Achievable - Will you be inspired or overwhelmed by this goal?

Realistic - Can you visualize success? (think about improvement over perfection)

Time-bound - How often or for how long will you make this change?

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