

# The Benefits of Sleep



After a good night's sleep, we wake feeling refreshed, alert and ready for the day ahead. Sleep affects how we look, feel and act every day, and has a major role in the overall quality of our lives. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), more than one-third of U.S. adults report not getting enough sleep, and between 10 and 30 percent struggle with chronic insomnia, the inability to fall asleep and/or stay asleep. Getting the quality and quantity of sleep your body needs can help protect your mental health, physical health and safety.

## Mental Health

While you are sleeping, your brain is preparing for the next day. The National Institutes of Health states a good night's sleep helps to improve learning, problem solving skills, attention span, decision making, and creativity. In adults, a lack of sleep has been linked to depression, suicide and risky behavior. Among children and teens, a lack of sleep may lead to feeling stressed and getting lower grades.

## Physical Health

Your body needs sleep to stay healthy. Deep sleep triggers hormones to promote cell repair and boost the immune system. People who are sleep deprived often have trouble fighting common infections and colds. The CDC states a lack of sleep is also associated with a number of chronic diseases and conditions, including:

- diabetes
- heart disease
- high blood pressure
- obesity
- stroke
- depression

## Safety

The average adult should get approximately seven to eight hours of sleep each night. Young children need at least 10 hours of sleep, while teenagers need at least 9 hours. After several nights of losing one to two hours of sleep, the body's ability to function suffers. People who are sleep deprived are less productive at work and school, take longer to finish tasks, have a slower reaction time, and make more mistakes. The CDC states drowsy driving can be as dangerous as driving while drunk. In fact, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reported drowsy driving in 2017 caused about 91,000 crashes, 50,000 injuries and 800 fatalities.

A good night's sleep is important for people of all ages. Don't suffer from a lack of sleep. If you have problems falling asleep, staying asleep or do not feel rested when you wake, talk with your doctor to determine the cause of your sleep problem and how it can be treated.



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