

# FIRST THINGS FIRST. ARE YOU GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP?

## SO HOW MUCH SLEEP DO YOU NEED?



Some people brag that they can power through a day with just a few hours of sleep, but they are disregarding the scientific facts. An adult needs 7-8 hours of sleep each night and younger people need even more.

1 in 5 respondents in a survey of 285,000 employees across 185 countries rated their overall sleep as either extremely poor, very poor or poor.

An additional 2 in 5 people rated their sleep quality as only average.<sup>2</sup>

When researchers exposed a group of 153 people to the common cold, those who **slept less than 7 hours a night were almost 3 times more likely to catch a cold.**<sup>5</sup>

**"A major consideration, borne out by Harvard research, is the fact that people who lack sleep don't view sleep as important."**<sup>1</sup>

The quantity and quality of sleep we get on a regular basis is foundational to strong performance in all things—whether being productive in our jobs, maintaining relationships, solving problems, making good decisions or operating tools or machinery (like a motor vehicle) in a safe manner.

When people are sleep deprived, their mental capacities are affected.



Deficits in these areas result in increased workplace accident rates, increased errors and a decrease in productivity.

## THE SIDE OF POOR SLEEP...

- 1 Increases your appetite, typically to crave sugary foods.
- 2 Weakens your immune system and promotes inflammation.<sup>3</sup>
- 3 May promote neurodegenerative processes, resulting in a loss of brain tissue.<sup>4</sup>
- 4 Contributes to the risk of heart disease, strokes and can intensify arthritis and premature aging.
- 5 Increases blood pressure.
- 6 Makes you irritable.
- 7 Often leads to symptoms of depression.
- 8 Contributes to lapses in attention and reduced focus that can result in mistakes and accidents.

## THE SIDE OF GOOD SLEEP...

- 1 When you're sleeping, you're working, too! The first half of a full night's sleep replenishes the body and the second half restores the mind—sometimes allowing us to work through problems in our sleep!
- 2 Sleep replenishes your immune system.
- 3 Sleep strengthens the memory of what you learned during the day.
- 4 Sleep helps with weight loss. Sleep and metabolism are controlled by the same sectors of the brain. If you are working at losing weight with diet and exercise, you'll want to place similar effort on getting good sleep.
- 5 Sleep builds muscle. When you sleep, you recover, and that means you replace, repair and rebuild!
- 6 Sleep helps you think more clearly, have quicker reflexes and better focus.
- 7 Sleep helps your skin recover moisture, while excess water in the body is processed for removal.
- 8 Sleep is pleasurable.

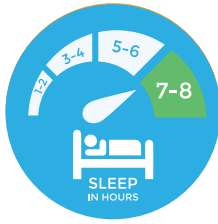
**AND IT'S FREE!**

## DROWSY, DISTRACTED, OR FOCUSED... YOUR DECISIONS DRIVE YOUR SAFETY

References for all pages can be found at <http://trafficsafety.org/dsww/dsww-2016-materials/references>

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## GOT KIDS?

### NEW RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOURS OF SLEEP

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine issued these new guidelines<sup>9</sup> for the hours of sleep children need on a regular basis to promote optimal health:

**Infants 4–12 months**  
**12–16 hours per 24 hours**  
(including naps)

**Toddlers 1–2 years**  
**11–14 hours per 24 hours**  
(including naps)

**Pre-schoolers 3–5 years**  
**10–13 hours per 24 hours**  
(including naps)

**School-aged 6–12 years**  
**9–12 hours per 24 hours**

**Teens 13–18 years**  
**8–10 hours per 24 hours**

### SET A BEDTIME FOR ELECTRONICS

A good routine to promote healthy sleep for kids and parents alike is to set a bedtime for electronic devices. Use a central charging area away from the bedrooms to put everyone's mobile devices to bed a couple of hours before the kids' bedtimes. Not only will it improve sleep habits, but it's an opportunity for the family to "reconnect" at the end of the day.

### BEDTIME RITUALS ARE NOT JUST FOR THE KIDS

A bedtime ritual is key to a good night's sleep, for adults as well as kids. Establish a bedtime routine for yourself and aim to stick to it nightly for a consistent sleep schedule.

# SLEEP IS CRUCIAL FOR WELL-BEING

While it was previously thought the secret to wellness was "nutrition + exercise," a growing body of experts is recommending that sleep be added to the equation.

Now **nutrition + exercise + 7-8 hours of quality sleep** is the new formula for **well-being**.



### GOOD SLEEP IS MORE THAN A NUMBER. IT'S QUANTITY + QUALITY

Beware...You can't judge "good" sleep by the number of hours in bed. If you regularly wake during the night, you will likely feel the signs of sleep deprivation.

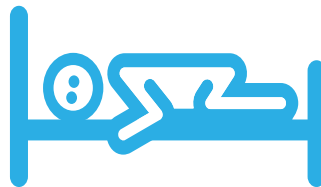
#### QUANTITY: LIFESTYLE OR OCCUPATIONAL SLEEP LOSS

Social life, shift work and parenting responsibilities can affect sleep quantity.

#### QUALITY: SLEEP DISORDERS

Sleep disorders can prevent restful sleep, resulting in excessive daytime sleepiness and dysfunction.

50–70 million Americans suffer from a sleep disorder, according to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine. It's estimated that 80% of people with sleep apnea go undiagnosed.



1 in 3 suffers from insomnia

1 in 4 has obstructive sleep apnea

1 in 10 has restless leg syndrome<sup>6</sup>

For more information on sleep disorders and their symptoms, visit the National Sleep Foundation's website: <https://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-disorders-problems>

### ARE YOU SABOTAGING YOUR SLEEP?

Common and seemingly harmless behaviors can prevent you from getting the sleep you need. Some examples include:



Snuggling up with phones, laptops, and other electronic gadgets in the hour leading up to bedtime exposes you to blue-and-white light that studies show prevents our brains from releasing melatonin, a hormone that tells our bodies it's nighttime.<sup>7</sup>



Late night dining won't leave enough time to digest your food and you could be kept awake by heartburn, gas or a sugar- or caffeine-fueled energy surge. It's best to finish dinner at least two hours before bed.



Sleeping with a furry friend improves sleep for some but inhibits it for others. Something to keep in mind if you are a seasonal allergy sufferer (and 60 million of us are) is to bathe your pets often during the months when they bring in more contaminants (like pollen) from outside. As hard as it can be, you may want to consider alternate sleeping arrangements for your pet during high allergy season, if not all nights.

The National Sleep Foundation reports that almost 95% of people use smartphones or other electronic devices within an hour of attempting to fall asleep.<sup>8</sup>

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