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Live. Life. Well.

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How Much Rest Do You Really Need?

Getting sufficient amounts of restful sleep is essential for good health. According to the Sleep Foundation¹, most adults need between 7 and 9 hours of sleep each day, though this can vary greatly from person to person depending on factors like physical activity, muscle mass, and chronic health conditions.

It has been estimated that as many as one-third of Americans² and Canadians³ get less than 7 hours of sleep each night, a level that has been linked to an increased risk for diabetes, cancer, and accidents. Similarly, the Institute of Medicine estimates⁴ that 50 to 70 million Americans are plagued with chronic sleep disorders, which can alter immune function and metabolism.

Being able to recognize the early warning signs of sleep deprivation can help you make the necessary lifestyle changes to get better rest.

Here are some signs that you may not be getting enough sleep:

You cannot think clearly. Problem solving and critical thinking activities are significantly muted when you are sleep deprived.

You doze off or feel tired throughout the day. Excessive sleepiness during waking hours is another indicator that you could be sleep deficient.

You are irritable. Irritability and increased vulnerability to stress could also indicate that you need more rest.

You have gained weight. While there are many factors that contribute to weight gain, a significant amount of research points to sleep insufficiency as being a big one. Hormone levels that regulate hunger and fullness shift during states of sleeplessness, and that can hinder your ability to regulate your appetite and your weight.

If you are not getting enough sleep, consider starting a sleep journal to see if you can identify any patterns that might be contributing to your sleeplessness. Then, if you still struggle to get enough rest, talk with your doctor to see what other treatment options are available.



1. <https://doi.org/10.5665/sleep.1846>.

3. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28930365/>

2. <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/how-sleep-works>.

4. <https://doi.org/10.5665/sleep.1846>



Evening Self-Care Rituals to Help You Unwind

Unwinding after a full day is a challenge for many, but because experts recommend getting at least 7 hours of restful sleep each night, it is something that needs to be prioritized.

Here are some evening self-care rituals to help you unwind:

Use essential oils. Aromatherapy has been shown to have a positive impact on mood. Certain essential oils⁵, like lavender, jasmine, chamomile, and valerian have been shown to have a sedative effect.

Adjust lighting. Lighting is heavily involved with your circadian rhythm and can have a direct impact on your sleep. For this reason, dimming the lights in the evening may help you relax and unwind.

Avoid caffeine. If you struggle with falling asleep, try reducing your caffeine consumption during the day. Limit your intake to the morning hours and see how it affects your sleep patterns.

Set a bedtime alarm. Use your alarm as a reminder to begin easing into a more restful state. You can set your alarm for tasks such as turning off the TV, tucking in your digital devices for the evening, or reading a book.

Upgrade your bedding. Assess the condition of your mattress and pillow. If neither have been replaced for an extended period of time, you may want to consider upgrading them.



Adjust the temperature. It has been suggested that the ideal temperature for sleep is 65 degrees Fahrenheit. Of course, this is highly variable from person to person, and it may require some experimenting to find the temperature that is right for you.⁶

Seek expert guidance. If you have tried a number of different self-care strategies and you still struggle to get good sleep, seek guidance from your healthcare team to explore other treatment options.

*Creating evening self-care rituals
can help you stay aligned with
your natural circadian rhythms, so
you can get better sleep.*

5. <https://doi.org/10.1089/acm.2013.0311>

6. <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/bedroom-environment/best-temperature-for-sleep>



Sleep Apnea: Risks & Signs

A 2019 study⁷ estimated that at least 730 million people suffer with sleep apnea globally. According to the Cleveland Clinic, sleep apnea is diagnosed “when you stop breathing for 10 seconds or longer — at least five times an hour — during sleep.”

Sleep apnea is a treatable condition. However, if left untreated it can pose significant health risks, including sudden cardiac death. For that reason, it is important to take risk factors seriously.

Risk Factors for Sleep Apnea

Weight. While not perfect, the body mass index (BMI) is a quick way to assess your weight. Being overweight, defined as a BMI between 25-29⁹, is linked to an increased risk for sleep apnea.

Smoking. Smoking is associated with increased pulmonary inflammation, which also increases the risk of developing sleep apnea.

Neck Circumference. A wide neck circumference, often accompanied by excess body weight, has been linked to a higher incidence of sleep apnea.

Comorbidities. Sleep apnea is common in the presence of other health conditions, such as congestive heart failure, hypertension, diabetes, polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), and asthma.

Male. Men have a higher incidence of sleep apnea than women, and there have also been an increased number of cases reported in individuals undergoing female-to-male gender reassignment⁸.



Signs of Sleep Apnea

Snoring loudly. Loud snoring is one of the most common signs of sleep apnea, and sleepless partners are often the first to detect it.

Gasping or choking during sleep. While gasping during sleep is also tied to other medical conditions, such as acid reflux and post-nasal drip, it is also a common sign of sleep apnea.

Morning headaches. Prolonged bouts of oxygen deprivation can cause headaches, especially in the morning.

If you are concerned that you might have some risk factors or signs of sleep apnea, schedule an appointment with your doctor as soon as possible. A referral to a sleep specialist may be necessary.

7. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-2600\(19\)30198-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S2213-2600(19)30198-5)

8. <https://aasm.org/rising-prevalence-of-sleep-apnea-in-u-s-threatens-public-health/>

9. <https://doi.org/10.5664/jcsm.8010>



Health Benefits of Napping

A Nap a Day?

Napping isn't just for babies. Studies show that an afternoon nap is great for adults, too. There's no need to feel lazy for indulging in daytime sleep. A short nap in the mid-afternoon can boost memory, improve job performance, lift your mood, make you more alert, and ease stress. Cozy up to these nap benefits.

It Can Improve Your Memory

Studies have shown that sleep plays an important role in storing memories. A nap can help you remember things learned earlier in the day as much as a full night's sleep. Napping works to keep you from forgetting things like motor skills, sense perception, and verbal recall, too.

You May Be Able to Connect the Dots Easier

Not only can napping help you remember things you've just learned, but it could help your brain draw connections between things you find out. In one study, nappers found it easier to put together information they got earlier in the day.

It May Lift Your Mood

If you're feeling down, try taking a nap to lift your spirits. Napping, or even just resting for an hour without falling asleep, can brighten your outlook. Experts say relaxation that comes from lying down and resting is a mood booster, whether you fall asleep or not.



Small Naps Bring Big Benefits

A nap as short as 10 minutes can be beneficial, but keep your nap to 30 minutes or less so you don't wake up feeling more tired. That grogginess you can feel after a nap is called sleep inertia. The longer you nap, the more likely you are to have that feeling. The worse it is, the more time you'll need to wake up and transition back to work.

They Can Ease Stress

If you're under a lot of pressure, a nap can release stress and improve your immune health. Experts believe that a 30-minute nap can do the trick.

They Are Good for Your Heart

A nap can even help your ticker. A study found that people who napped for 45 to 60 minutes had lower blood pressure after going through mental stress. So a nap can help your body recover from pressure-filled situations.

When Should You Nap?

To get the most benefits out of a nap, you need to time it right. Most people will find an afternoon snooze to be the most natural and helpful. Some say sleep is better between 2 and 3 p.m., when humans naturally have a dip in alertness. The time that works best for you will depend on how rested you are to begin with. If you're well-rested, a slightly later nap is better. If you're behind on sleep, you'll want to nap earlier.



International Women's Day

March 8th is International Women's Day

Imagine a gender equal world. International Women's Day is held annually on March 8th to celebrate women's achievements throughout history and across nations. It is also known as the United Nations (UN) Day for Women's Rights and International Peace. In 1981, Congress established National Women's History Week to be commemorated the second week of March each year.

Gender parity in government, workplaces, health care, sports and media coverage is achievable through collective actions. This year's theme,

#BreakTheBias, will inspire people to think about equity, question stereotypes and celebrate the achievements of women around the world.

Supporters (both men and women) are asked to "strike the #BreakTheBias pose" in selfies. Post your #IWD2022 message on social media with both of your hands placed in a "X" position in front of your chest. Take a photo, and publish on any social media outlet for a strong call-to-action for others to support #EachforEqual and #BreakTheBias.





Chamomile Tea Sleepy Bites

Prep Time

15 Minutes

Chill Time

15 Minutes

Servings

24

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup dates, pitted
- 1/2 cup dried tart cherries
- 1/2 cup walnut halves
- 1/2 cup instant rolled oats
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon chamomile tea leaves
- 1/3 cup almond butter



INSTRUCTIONS

1. Add dates, cherries, walnuts, chamomile tea and oats to a food processor.
2. Process ingredients for 3-5 minutes until the mixture is completely blended into a medium-sized crumb.
3. Transfer to a mixing bowl and add honey and almond butter. Mix until almond butter and honey are evenly distributed.
4. Form into 12-15 bites, slightly smaller than a golf ball.
5. Enjoy now or place in the fridge. Energy bites will last up to 2 weeks in the refrigerator.

Nutrition Facts

Calories	97
Fat	3.5g
Sodium	6mg
Carbohydrate	16.8mg
Protein	1.6g

Source:

[Chamomile Tea Sleepytime Bites | Foods to Help with Sleep \(mcdanielnutrition.com\)](#)



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