8 tips for better slumber

**Mind & Body**

**8 tips for better slumber**

Am for seven to eight hours of sleep a night. Less than four hours of sleep is an over 10 hours is likely to produce detrimental effects over time.

- **Keep a regular bedtime and routine**
  - Going to bed and getting up every day (even on weekends) at the same time will help to set your internal clock and get your circadian rhythm back on track. Follow the same routine 30 to 60 minutes before going to bed. It can be anything that is relaxing and helps you unwind, taking a warm bath, listening to soothing music or meditating.

- **Lower the temperature**
  - A cool bedroom – between 20 and 22°C – helps to lower the body temperature, a prerequisite for deep sleep. Wearing socks and mittens is another trick to being photoperiodically effective. Do no advise from the bedside table or near the window of the skin. When body temperature falls, sleep automatically follows.

- **Avoid overeating or being hungry**
  - A bedtime snack that contains tryptophan is best, as this amino acid converts to serotonin by the body. Try a small dish of lean turkey with a piece of toast or an oatmeal cookie with a glass of milk. Avoid indulging in a sugar spike supper before bedtime.

- **Say no to caffeine and nicotine**
  - Both stimulants and sleep are linked to decaffeinated coffee, for example, coffee or tea, at least six hours before bedtime. Even if you are a hard-core smoker, put down after eight p.m.

- **Get at least one to two hours of sunlight daily**
  - Light down the secretion of melatonin, a hormone that controls the circadian rhythm of our brains and body. Getting two hours of sunlight during the day will ensure that the normal wake-and-sleep cycles of the body are maintained.

- **Keep electronic devices out of the bedroom**
  - Many use their smartphones as alarm clocks, making it hard to escape completely from work and social networks. Sleep-disrupting blue light, which is emitted from the screens of smartphones, tablets and laptops, suppresses the body’s production of melatonin.

- **Exercise earlier in the day**
  - Exercise raises the level of cortisol, which is responsible for keeping you awake. Exercising early in the morning or mid-afternoon will mean that cortisol levels are down to its usual amount by the time you are ready to go to bed. This should last three hours between your workout and your bedtimes.

- **Avoid daytime naps**
  - Such naps can disrupt the normal pattern of sleep and wakefulness. A constant craving for an afternoon nap and excessive daytime sleepiness may be symptoms of a more serious condition called obstructive sleep apnea. Insomnia can also be triggered by physiological conditions such as sleep apnea, monophasic or depression. Some drugs such as antidepressants, beta-blockers, diuretics and painkillers can also disturb your sleep pattern. To ensure a dinner of sleep it still makes you.

**Are you getting enough shut-eye?**

**General sleep guidelines across age groups**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Age Group</strong></th>
<th><strong>Recommended Sleep</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 month to 1 year</td>
<td>12 to 17 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 2 years</td>
<td>11 to 14 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 5 years</td>
<td>10 to 13 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 12 years</td>
<td>9 to 12 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 to 18 years</td>
<td>8 to 10 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Sleeping too much may be even worse**

**Sleep Health**

Senior Health Correspondent

Most people know that not getting enough sleep is bad for one’s health. Few realize that sleeping too long may be even worse.

A large-scale study in the United States found that both insufficient and excessive sleep durations increased the risk of death, especially from heart disease, even after accounting for other health conditions.

This refers to people who usually slept less than five hours or more than nine hours a night. The researchers published their findings in the Journal of the American Medical Association, which has over 1200 members worldwide.

"The articles describe that as people age, their sleep patterns tend to change. But it is noted that "persistent shorter sleep durations increased their risk of death by 14 per cent, while 12 hours of sleep or more increased their risk by 23 per cent" for people who were sleeping long hours at both the start of the study and in 11 years."

They faced a 47 per cent increase in risk, particularly for coronary artery disease, increased risk of death by 14 per cent and deaths associated with long sleep durations.

Another researcher in the study, Professor Michael Chou, director of the Centre for Cognitive Neuroscience at the Duke-NUS Medical School, said: "These findings are consistent with our previous studies, which have shown that shorter sleep durations increased their risk of death, especially from heart disease, even after accounting for other health conditions.

This is a little less than the seven to eight hours generally recommended for adults. But he added: "We don’t quite know why."

Aside from heightened risks of death, too much sleep can have negative effects on the brain, such as the risk of Alzheimer’s Disease. It is currently unknown how much sleep is too much or too little for the brain.

High amounts of sleep were found to be associated with Alzheimer’s disease. These people also reported shorter sleep durations and poorer sleep quality.

---

**General guidelines for keeping you awake:**

- Exercise earlier in the day.
- A bedtime snack that contains tryptophan is best.
- Avoid overeating or being hungry.
- Say no to caffeine and nicotine.
- Get at least one to two hours of sunlight daily.
- Exercise earlier in the day.
- Avoid daytime naps.
- **Keep electronic devices out of the bedroom.**
  - Many use their smartphones as alarm clocks, making it hard to escape completely from work and social networks. Sleep-disrupting blue light, which is emitted from the screens of smartphones, tablets and laptops, suppresses the body’s production of melatonin.
- Exercise earlier in the day.
- Avoid daytime naps.
- **Keep electronic devices out of the bedroom.**
  - Many use their smartphones as alarm clocks, making it hard to escape completely from work and social networks. Sleep-disrupting blue light, which is emitted from the screens of smartphones, tablets and laptops, suppresses the body’s production of melatonin.
- Exercise earlier in the day.
- Avoid daytime naps.