

August 2023

IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

Why is Sleep Important?



- Sleep is important because it gives your body and mind a chance to recharge. But did you know that sleep has other positive effects? Sleep can help decrease your risk to certain diseases, it helps your body remain healthy, it supports growth and development, it's good for your brain health (like helping you think clearly, learn and concentrate) and more!
- [Johns Hopkins \(All Children's Hospital\)](#) states, "...kids who regularly get an adequate amount of sleep have improved attention, behavior, learning, memory and overall mental and physical health."
 - Did you know that children that don't get enough sleep may not only be grumpy, but lack of sleep or poor sleep can have effects on children that [mimic ADHD](#) (hyperactivity and attention, which can affect their school performance) and lack of sleep has been linked to allergic rhinitis (hay fever-causes cold-like symptoms), anxiety and depression.
- Sleep is also very important for teenagers. [Johns Hopkins Medicine](#) noted, "Teenagers are going through a second developmental stage of cognitive maturation," explains Crocetti. Additional sleep supports their developing brain, as well as physical growth spurts. It also helps protect them from serious consequences like depression or drug use".

How Much Sleep Do I Need?

The [Sleep Foundation](#) has a chart outlining how much sleep various age groups need (*sleep recommendations vary between sources*). Here are a few examples:

- Preschool (3-5 years) need 10-13 hours
- School-age (6-13 years) need 9-11 hours
- Teens (14-17 years) need 8-10 hours
- Young Adult (18-25 years) need 7-9 hours



How Can I Improve My Sleep?

- Create a sleep routine for each family member, this may include "shutting things down" (turning off or dimming the lights, turning off the television, putting phones away) at a certain time, putting on your comfy clothes, making yourself some night time tea, journaling to clear your mind or organize your thoughts, brushing your teeth and then reading a book before it's time for bed
- Keep a consistent sleep schedule by going to bed at a similar time each day (even on the weekends)
- Limit screen time before bed and keep electronics (cellphone, television, etc.) out of the bedroom
- Limit or avoid caffeine and sugary drinks/food starting mid-day or a few hours before your bed time
- Make sure your bedroom is comfortable which includes: temperature of the room, lightening, bedding and even sound and smell (do you like your bedroom quiet or with the sound of the ocean? Does the smell of lavender help you fall asleep?)
- Practice meditation or other relaxation techniques like journaling or focused breathing. This will help you prepare for sleep by "winding down" your mind and body
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle by eating nutritious foods and exercising
- Help teach children and youth the importance of sleep and work with them to create a good sleep routine and healthy sleep habits. Remember consistence and routine is important, but so is having a sleep routine that is unique to the person
- Read other articles about the importance of sleep and good sleep hygiene
- And remember, sleep is part of your overall health and should be discussed at your and your child/youth's annual physical exam and well child exams



Resources

- Sleep Foundation: [Why Do We Need Sleep?](#), [Children and Sleep](#), and [Teens and Sleep](#)
- CDC: [Sleep in Middle and High School Students](#) and [Do Your Children Get Enough Sleep?](#)
- Johns Hopkins: [Teenagers and Sleep: How Much Sleep is Enough?](#) and [The Importance of Sleep for Kids](#)
- NIH: [Why is Sleep Important?](#) and [Children's Sleep Linked to Brain Development](#)

