

Sleep

No other activity delivers so many benefits with so little effort!

The quality of your sleep directly affects the quality of your waking life, including your mental sharpness, productivity, emotional balance, creativity, physical vitality, and even your weight.

When you're scrambling to meet the demands of modern life, cutting back on sleep can seem like the only answer. Who can afford to spend so much time sleeping? The truth is you can't afford not to. Even minimal sleep loss takes a toll on your mood, energy, and ability to handle stress.



Sleep Keeps Your Heart Healthy

Heart attacks and strokes are more common during the early morning hours. This fact may be explained by the way sleep interacts with the blood vessels. Lack of sleep has been associated with worsening of blood pressure and cholesterol, all risk factors for heart disease and stroke.

Sleep Reduces Stress

When your body is sleep deficient, it goes into a state of stress. The body's functions are put on high alert which causes an increase in blood pressure

and a production of stress hormones. Higher blood pressure increases your risk for heart attacks and strokes. Learn relaxation techniques to counter the effects of stress.

Sleep Makes You More Alert

Of course, a good night's sleep makes you feel energized and alert the next day. Being engaged and active not only feels great, it increases your chances for another good night's sleep. When you wake up feeling refreshed, use that energy to get out into the daylight, do active things, and be engaged in your world.

You'll sleep better the next night and increase your daily energy level.

Sleep May Help You Lose Weight

Researchers have also found that people who sleep less than seven hours per night are more likely to be overweight or obese. It is thought that the lack of sleep impacts the balance of hormones in the body that affect appetite. The hormones ghrelin and leptin, important for the regulation of appetite, have been found to be disrupted by lack of sleep. So if you are interested in controlling or losing weight, don't forget to pay attention to getting a good night's sleep.

Naps Make You Smarter

Napping during the day is not only an effective and refreshing alternative to caffeine, it can also protect your health and make you more productive.

Immune System In order to properly defend your body from harmful diseases, illnesses and viruses, your body must be rested. Harvard Medical School notes in their Health Publication, that "keeping up with sleep may also help fight cancer.



Average Sleep Needs	
Newborns (0-2 months)	12 - 18
Infants (3 months to 1 year)	14 - 15
Toddlers (1 to 3 years)	12 - 14
Preschoolers (3 to 5 years)	11 - 13
School-aged children (5 to 12 years)	10 - 11
Teens and preteens (12 to 18 years)	8.5 - 10
Adults (18+)	7.5 - 9

While sleep requirements vary slightly from person to person, most healthy adults need between 7.5 to 9 hours of sleep per night to function at their best.



[http:// www.helpguide.org/life/sleeping.htm](http://www.helpguide.org/life/sleeping.htm)

http://longevity.about.com/od/lifelongenergy/tp/healthy_sleep.htm

<http://www.sitnsleep.com/sleep-resources/sleep-and-health/we-sleep-for-a-reason-are-you-getting-yours>