

Sleep Facts

Did you know...?

1. A 2002 national sleep poll found that 58% of adults said they have trouble sleeping at least a few nights a week.
2. The same poll found that the majority of adults believe that their work quality suffers when they don't get enough sleep.
3. Most adults need 7 to 8 hours of sleep to function optimally, although this may vary from person to person.
4. Insomnia often involves more than just trouble falling asleep; it may also mean trouble staying asleep and waking too early.
5. Causes of insomnia include stressful situations, such as work or a death in the family; medical conditions, such as arthritis pain and depression; and medications; such as some antidepressants and blood pressure medicines.
6. People with chronic insomnia have a greater chance of developing depression than people who sleep well.
7. Good sleep hygiene is important for preventing insomnia. Good sleep hygiene includes maintaining a regular sleep schedule, using the bed only for sleep and sex, and avoiding caffeine 6 hours before bedtime—your doctor can tell you more.
8. Taken according to your doctor's instructions, prescription sleep aides can safely and effectively help you sleep better.
9. Your doctor can help you sleep better.

SLEEP NEEDS OVER THE LIFE CYCLE

Infants/Babies*	0-2 months: 10.5-18.5 hours 2-12 months: 14-15 hours
Toddlers/Children*	12-18 months: 13-15 hours 18 months-3 years: 12-14 hours 3-5 years: 11-13 hours 5-12 years: 9-11 hours
Adolescents	8.5-9.5 hours
Adults/Older Persons	On average: 7-9 hours

* Total time includes naps

When Do You Need to Seek Help?

If your sleep problems persist for longer than a week and are bothersome, or if sleepiness interferes with the way you feel or function during the day, a doctor's help may be needed. To get the most out of your doctor's visit, you'll find that it is often helpful to keep a diary of your sleep habits for about ten days to identify just how much sleep you're getting over a period of time and what you may be doing to interfere with it. It can help you document your problem so that your physician can best understand.

If the problem is the time it takes to fall asleep, staying asleep or waking up unrefreshed, your doctor may recommend lifestyle changes or behavioral approaches to treating the problem. However, lifestyle changes alone may not be enough. Treating insomnia with medication is the most common treatment for these sleep problems. In most cases, medication is only used until the immediate stressor is under control or lifestyle changes have had a chance to work.

While many individuals will try an over-the-counter medicine to help them sleep, these should be taken with caution. Your physician or pharmacist can help inform you about the different types of medications available and which would be most effective for you. Alcohol should not be used as a sleep aid.

For sleep apnea or other sleep disorder, your doctor may want to do a sleep study that will provide more information about your sleep pattern and whether you are breathing regularly while you sleep.

The bottom line is this: Adequate sleep is as essential to health and peak performance as exercise and good nutrition. If you aren't getting enough, talk to your physician. You deserve it.

For more information or to schedule an appointment contact:



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