

Sleep

Healthy Lifestyles Program (HeLP) - Children's Mercy Family Health Partners



Tired????? Not getting enough sleep? Getting enough sleep is necessary and contributes to good health. Did you know that adults need at least 7-9 hours of sleep? When you don't get enough sleep, your quality of life during the day is affected. Lack of sleep can interfere with your daily activities. People who suffer chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity and depression often have trouble sleeping.

THE FACTS: YOUR BRAIN AND BODY AT WORK

It may look like you are doing nothing when you are sleeping-your eyes are closed, your muscles are relaxed, your breathing is slowed. However, both your brain and body are active during sleep.

What does your brain do when you sleep?

You go through cycles when you sleep. The deep sleep where you dream is called REM sleep. Your mind works out problems through dreams. It has also been thought that sleep helps form memories. Deep sleep allows the mind to re-energize! Even if you miss one night of sleep, you might notice difficulty in learning, memory, concentration and problem solving.

QUICK TIP

If you lie in bed awake for more than 20-30 minutes, get up, go to a different room and participate in a quiet activity. Then, return to your bed when you feel sleepy. Do this as many times as needed.



What does your body do when you sleep?

Your body releases a growth hormone when you sleep. This aids in the growth and repair of the body tissues. Your muscles are also allowed a period to rest and relax.

Obesity and Sleep

Your body produces two hormones when you sleep: Ghrelin and Leptin. These hormones are related to weight loss and our sleep patterns.

Ghrelin production is **increased** when you do not get enough sleep. Ghrelin increases your appetite.

Leptin helps you feel satisfied when eating. Leptin production is **reduced** when you do not get enough sleep. Your body's hormones can be out of balance if you do not get enough sleep.

When your hormones are out of balance, you may think you are hungry when you really do not need food. When you give in to those cravings, you are at risk for overeating. Overeating may lead to excess weight gain.

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Sleep Disorders

Sleep-related disorders affect many people. Some major sleep disorders you may have heard of include:

- **Insomnia** - inability to fall asleep or stay asleep that affects your performance of daily activities
- **Narcolepsy** - excessive daytime sleepiness combined with sudden muscle weakness; these episodes often occur in unusual circumstances
- **Restless Leg Syndrome (RLS)** - an unpleasant sensation associated with aches and pains throughout the legs that can make it difficult to fall asleep
- **Sleep Apnea** - interruptions in sleep caused by occasional gasping or snoring noises or a temporary pause in breathing

This information is educational in nature and can be used as a guide. However, it is not intended to replace medical direction provided by your healthcare provider. Are you experiencing a sleep disorder? Please contact your healthcare provider to receive an evaluation.

IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE SLEEPING AT NIGHT, TRY SOME OF THESE TIPS:

DO...

- ... go to bed the same time every night.
- ... get up at the same time each day.
- ... get regular exercise each day.
- ... get exposure to the outdoor or bright lights, especially in the afternoon.
- ... keep the temperature in the bedroom comfortable.
- ... keep the bedroom dark and quiet when sleeping.
- ... use your bed only for sleeping.
- ... things that will help you relax before going to sleep: warm bath, calming thoughts, deep breaths.
- ... keep your hands and feet warm.
- ... take your medicines as directed.

DON'T ...

- ... exercise before going to bed.
- ... engage in stimulating activity just before bed (i.e. playing a competitive game, watching an exciting program or movies, having an important talk with a loved one)
- ... have caffeine in the evening (coffee, teas, chocolate, sodas, etc.)
- ... read or watch television in bed.
- ... use alcohol to help you sleep.
- ... go to bed too hungry or too full.
- ... take daytime naps.
- ... command yourself to go to sleep.

References:
"What is Sleep...and why we do it?" Erick Chudler PhD University of Washington
<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/Sleep/>
<http://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/guide/lose-weight-while-sleeping?page=3>

Notes:



Children's Mercy
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www.fhp.org

Customer Service: **1-800-347-9363 MO; 1-877-347-9363 KS**
Nurse Advice Line: **1-800-347-9369 24 hours a day**

This information is educational in nature and can be used as guide. However, it is not intended to replace a doctor's medical direction. If you have questions or concerns, talk to your doctor or healthcare provider.

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