

May 2021

This issue

How much is enough sleep

Tech-free sleep

Challenge event

Healthy hint

Recipe of the month

Wellness News

Poor sleep can affect your mood, your focus and your health.

Sleep

Are you getting enough sleep?

Here's what you should know

How many hours of shut-eye did you get last night? Americans average about 6.8 hours¹ with 40% banking less than six hours. Our sleeplessness has been fueled by technologies like the light bulb, TV and the Internet, which give us more ways to stay awake 24/7. Reports have linked a lack of sleep to depression, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, cancer and Alzheimer's disease.²

Not getting enough sleep hurts you and others.^{3,4}

- Impacts performance, including the ability to think clearly, react quickly and form memories
- Affects mood, leading to irritability and can lead to depression
- Can cause relationship problems, especially for children and teenagers
- Plays a role in blood pressure, sugar levels and inflammation control
- Increases the risk of heart disease and respiratory diseases
- Prevents the body from strengthening its immune system
- Can be dangerous – drowsy driving causes thousands of car crashes
- Magnifies the effects of alcohol

Tips for getting a good night's sleep⁵

1. Stick to a sleep schedule. Try to be consistent between weekdays and weekends.
2. Pay attention to what you eat and drink. Nicotine and caffeine can take hours to wear off; alcohol might make you feel sleepy, but can disrupt your sleep later on.
3. Create a restful environment. Avoid prolonged use of light-emitting screens just before bedtime.
4. Limit daytime naps to 30 minutes. And avoid taking them late in the day.

5. Include physical activity in your daily routine, but avoid being active close to bedtime.
6. Manage your worries. Stress management and meditation can help ease anxiety.

How much sleep do you need?

It varies from person to person. But if you're feeling drowsy during the day you haven't had enough sleep.

Adults: Most adults need seven to nine hours of sleep, although some people need as few as six or as many as 10 hours each day.

Children and teens: On average, teens need 8½ to 9½ hours each day. School-aged children need nine to 10.

Pregnant women in their first three months of pregnancy: They often need several hours more sleep each day than they needed before.

Sleep disorders⁶

Most people go through sleeping problems once in a while due to stress, hectic schedules and other outside influences. But, when these issues occur on a regular basis and interfere with daily life, they may suggest a sleeping disorder. Speak to a doctor if you feel lack of sleep could be a problem for you.

- **Insomnia** – This is when you can't fall asleep or remain asleep. It can be caused by jet lag, stress, anxiety, hormones or digestive problems.
- **Sleep apnea** – You have pauses in breathing during sleep. This is a serious medical condition that causes the body to take in less oxygen.
- **Parasomnias** – A group of disorders that cause abnormal movements and behaviors during sleep like sleepwalking, sleep talking, teeth grinding, nightmares and bed-wetting.
- **Restless leg syndrome** – You have an overwhelming need to move the legs.
- **Narcolepsy** – "Sleep attacks" where you suddenly feel extremely tired and fall asleep without warning.

Medical treatments for sleep disorders

Treatment for sleep disorders generally include a combination of medical treatments and lifestyle changes. They include sleeping pills, melatonin supplements and



Our sleeplessness has been fueled by technologies like the light bulb, TV and the Internet, which give us more ways to stay awake 24/7.

Challenge Event

National Mental Health Month

National Mental Health Month raises awareness about mental illness and related issues in the United States. In recent time, attitudes towards mental health issues appear to be changing. Negative attitudes and stigma associated with mental health have reduced and there has been growing acceptance towards mental health issues and support for people with them.

For more information on campaigns and activities visit <http://www.whathealth.com/awareness/event/nationalmentalhealthmonth.html>.

Healthy Hint #15

Tune out to tune in

Americans are heavier today than they were 20 years ago. We also spend a lot more time eating while staring at a screen – on a cell phone, computer, personal digital assistant (PDA) or TV. Plus, we’re choosing screen time over being active. And when your body takes in more calories than it burns, you end up with extra pounds.

So be aware of how you eat and use your time. Skip your online chat and meet up with a friend for a walk instead. Take a lunch break from your laptop and enjoy a healthy meal and good conversation with your coworker. At home, make TV time your physical activity time. You can work out without missing your favorite show.

Recipe of the month

Recipe provided by UNL, Nebraska.

Avocado veggie wrap

Servings: 4

Ingredients:

- 1 avocado, seeded, peeled and cut into chunks
- 1/2 cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1 teaspoon lime juice
- 1/2 cup carrots, grated
- 1/2 cup celery, chopped
- 1/4 cup red onion, chopped
- 12 ounces cooked chicken breast, cubed
- 1/2 cup blueberries
- 4 (8-inch) whole wheat tortillas
- 2 cups fresh spinach, chopped
- 2 tablespoons sunflower seeds or sliced almonds

Directions:

- In a medium bowl, mash 1/2 of the avocado chunks. Add yogurt and lime juice and mix until combined.
- Add remaining avocado, carrots, celery, onion, and chicken. Mix gently. Fold in blueberries.
- Place tortilla on a plate. Top with 1/4 of the chicken mixture. Top with spinach and sunflower seeds.
- Roll up tortilla.

breathing devices to changing your diet, reducing sugar intake, drinking less water before bedtime and eating smaller, low carbohydrate meals before going to sleep. It's a good idea to speak with your doctor about your symptoms so you can find the solution that's right for you.

For more information and tips on getting the zzzz's you need, visit WebMD's Healthy Sleep Health Center at webmd.com.

Sources: 1) BEST LIFE website: This Is How Much Sleep the Average American Gets (accessed January 2019): <http://bestlifeonline.com>. 2) Forbes website: America The Sleep Deprived (accessed January 2019): <http://forbes.com>. 3) Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development website: How Is the Body Affected By Sleep Deprivation? (accessed January 2019): <http://nichd.nih.gov/health/topics/sleep/conditioninfo/sleep-deprivation>. 4) WebMD website: Are You Getting Enough Sleep? (accessed January 2019): <http://webmd.com>. 5) Mayo Clinic website: Sleep tips: 6 steps to better sleep (accessed January 2019): <http://mayoclinic.com>. 6) Healthline website: Sleep Disorders (accessed January 2019): <http://healthline.com>.

Tech-free sleep

Spending nights off the grid can improve your health

Is your smartphone or tablet the last thing you see before dozing off and the first thing you wake up to? That could cost you a good night's sleep. Because when you look at a device, your brain is being stimulated rather than relaxed. The result: groggy mornings and less productive days.

Adults regularly getting less than seven hours of sleep a night are also increasing their risk for:

- Weight gain
- High blood pressure
- Adult onset diabetes from high blood sugar
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Mental health issues

If your tech needs aren't in sync with your sleep cycle, don't worry. These five simple tweaks can help you sleep better and longer:

- **Move it.** Charge your device far from your bed, where you won't be tempted to sneak a peek in the middle of the night.
- **Dim it.** That bright blue light coming from your screen? It can mess up your body's natural rhythms and production of melatonin, a hormone that regulates the sleep-wake cycle. So dim your screen or use a red filter app at night.
- **Set it.** Don't trust yourself to turn it off? Set a bedtime alert and stick to it.
- **Lock it.** Losing yourself for hours online? Yes, there's an app for that – an app-blocking app.
- **Block it.** Avoid late-night notifications or unwelcome calls. Select the "do not disturb" mode on your device for uninterrupted shut-eye.

Poor sleep can affect your mood, your focus and your health.

Choose sleep time over screen time today!

Source: American Heart Association: How to Sleep Better with Tech Tweaks (accessed December 2019): heart.org.