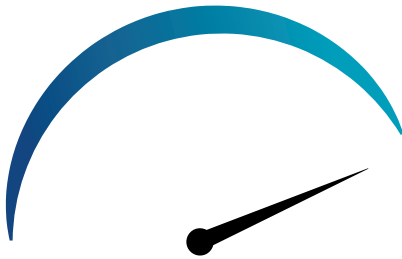


How Much Sleep Should We Get Each Night?



Proper sleep is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle. Not getting enough of it can cause you to feel groggy throughout the day and can potentially lead to a variety of health concerns. Because of this, it's important to know exactly how much sleep you should be getting each night.



- Infants four months to one year should get 12 to 16 hours of sleep per day, including naps.
- Children 1-2 years should get 11 to 14 hours of sleep per day, including naps.
- Children 3-5 years should get 10 to 13 hours of sleep per day, including naps.
- Children 6-12 years should get 9 to 12 hours of sleep each night.
- Teens should get 8-10 hours of sleep per night.
- Adults should get 7 or more hours of sleep per night.¹

Why Is Getting Enough Sleep Important?

No matter what age you are, sleep deprivation has health consequences.

For children, proper sleep has been shown to help with learning, attention, memory, emotional control and physical health.

In adults, lack of sleep has been linked with weight gain, high blood pressure, stroke, heart disease and depression.

If you're concerned about the quality of your sleep or that you're not getting enough of it, our team can help. Schedule an appointment with one of our expert providers at Carolina Ear, Nose & Throat Sinus and Allergy Center and we'll make sure you rest easily.



¹ National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. How Sleep Works: How Much Is Enough? <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/sleep/how-much-sleep>



Getting Ready for Bed? Here's What Not To Do

What do caffeine, alcohol and screen time have in common? They're all things you should avoid right before bed to ensure you get the best night's sleep. Understanding how certain habits can interrupt your sleep may be your first step towards a night of better rest.



Caffeine

Caffeine makes you feel awake by blocking the sleep-inducing chemical adenosine. It should be avoided at least eight hours prior to bedtime.



Large Meals or Drinks

Big meals can lead to indigestion, while too many fluids can cause you to wake frequently to urinate—both of which can keep you up at night.



Spicy and Acidic Foods

These foods can disturb your sleep by causing heartburn and acid reflux.



Sugary Foods

Treats with sugar may taste good, but the changes they cause in your blood sugar can keep you up at night.



Tyramine-Rich Foods

This amino acid results in increased brain activity, which can lead to difficulty falling asleep. Tyramine-rich foods include tomatoes, eggplant, soy sauce and certain cheeses.

Alcohol

Alcohol can keep you in the lighter stages of sleep and cause you to wake up more often.



Exercise

While it's ideal to get at least 30 minutes of exercise each day, it's best to do this earlier than 2-3 hours before your bedtime.

Naps

Naps late afternoon can make it difficult to fall asleep at night.



Screen Time

Turn your electronic devices off a minimum of one hour before bed. If you can't avoid using your phone at night, minimize your exposure to blue light by turning down the brightness or using a nighttime mode.

If you're still struggling to sleep after cutting out these factors, Carolina Ear, Nose & Throat Sinus and Allergy Center is here to partner with you on your journey to restorative rest. Make an appointment today.

The Link Between Sleep and Circadian Rhythms

Did you know that your body has several internal clocks? Known as circadian clocks, they usually follow a 24-hour repeating pattern called the circadian rhythm. Your central circadian clock is in the brain and lets you know when you need sleep.

If this gets out of sync, you may have trouble sleeping and feel fatigued during the day. At Carolina Ear, Nose & Throat Sinus and Allergy Center, we'll work with you to determine what's causing this and help you get a good night's sleep again.



EVERYONE'S CIRCADIAN CLOCK IS UNIQUE

Many people have a natural circadian cycle that is slightly longer than 24 hours—which is why some people naturally wake up early and others naturally stay up late. They can also change as we get older, since cells in the brain that promote sleep are lost as a normal part of aging.¹

HOW DOES CIRCADIAN RHYTHM AFFECT SLEEP?

Our circadian rhythm aligns wakefulness with day and sleep with night to create a consistent cycle of restorative rest.

During daytime, light exposure results in our internal clock sending signals to the brain that generate alertness. When it reaches night, the internal clock initiates melatonin production to promote sleep, and continues to send signals to help us sleep through the night.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THE SLEEP/WAKE CYCLE GETS OUT OF SYNC?

Some disruptions may be the result of night shift work or jet lag. In other cases, they may be caused by a sleep disorder, such as:

- Insomnia: Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, which results in poor or too little sleep.
- Narcolepsy: Periods of excessive daytime sleepiness.

If you're dealing with either of these conditions, make an appointment with Carolina Ear, Nose & Throat Sinus and Allergy Center today. We're here to help you find relief.

¹ National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. How Sleep Works: Your Sleep/Wake Cycle. <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/sleep/sleep-wake-cycle>



Mindfulness Meditation Offers a Path to Peaceful Nights

If you struggle to fall asleep because of racing thoughts or anxiety, you're not alone. According to the American Psychological Association, 43 percent of Americans say stress has made them lie awake at night at least once a month.¹

One solution that can help you rest easier is mindfulness meditation.

WHAT IS MINDFULNESS?

Mindfulness is the ability to be fully present in the current moment, aware of where we are, what we're doing and how we're feeling, without passing judgment on the situation.

Mindfulness meditation often involves focusing on your breathing and bringing your mind's attention to the present without worrying about the past or future.

HOW DOES MINDFULNESS HELP WITH SLEEP?

In a study that followed 49 middle-aged and older adults who struggled to fall asleep, half of participants completed a six-week mindfulness awareness program where they studied meditation and related exercises. The remaining participants completed a course on ways to improve sleep habits.

Following both programs, participants in the mindfulness group experienced less insomnia, depression and fatigue than those in the sleep education group.²

HOW CAN I GET STARTED WITH MINDFULNESS MEDITATION?

- Focus on something that calms you, such as your breath, a sound, word or phrase. If you choose one of the latter, repeat it aloud or silently as you inhale or exhale.
- Focus on the present moment. If you notice your mind wandering, return your focus to your meditation.

Practicing mindfulness for at least 20 minutes daily can help you relax more easily in stressful situations, which can make it easier to let go of stress when you're trying to sleep.³

¹ American Psychological Association. Stress and Sleep. <https://www.apa.org/news/press/releases/stress/2013/sleep>

² JAMA Internal Medicine. Mindfulness Meditation and Improvement in Sleep Quality and Daytime Impairment Among Older Adults With Sleep Disturbances A Randomized Clinical Trial. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamainternalmedicine/fullarticle/2110998>

³ Harvard Health Blog. Mindfulness Meditation Helps Fight Insomnia, Improves Sleep. <https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/mindfulness-meditation-helps-fight-insomnia-improves-sleep-201502187726>