



WHY SLEEP MATTERS

Did you know?

24 hours of sleep loss or 5 consecutive days of 5 hours of sleep leaves you functioning as though you are legally intoxicated = Working Drunk.

Sleep loss doesn't just leave you feeling tired. There are serious consequences including:

POOR DECISION MAKING

INCREASED INJURY RISK

LACK OF FOCUS

UNWANTED WEIGHT GAIN

INCREASED IRRITABILITY

POOR MUSCLE RECOVERY

LOW MORALE

LOWER TESTOSTERONE

HABITS FOR HEALTHY SLEEP

THE DOs



Keep a regular sleep schedule. Go to bed and wake up at the same time even on off-duty days.

7+

Schedule enough time to get 7 or more hours of sleep a night.



Establish a routine. Start an hour before bed to calm the body and brain.

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Only use your bed for sleep and not work or entertainment.



Exercise regularly during the day, but only light exercise closer to bedtime.



Get out of bed if you cannot fall asleep to avoid connecting your bed with stress.

& DON'Ts

Use electronic devices in bed or within an hour of bedtime.



Go to bed hungry, thirsty, or too full.



Consume caffeine within 6 hours before bed or more than 400mg/day.



Drink alcohol before bed because it disrupts healthy sleep cycles.



Nap too close to bedtime or too long if you have trouble sleeping at night.



Focus on not being able to sleep (e.g., repeatedly checking the time).



Try this breathing exercise to help focus the mind and prepare for sleep.

BREATH IN AND OUT, FEELING THE BELLY RISE AND FALL WITH EACH BREATH
NOW BREATHE IN AND OUT 7 TIMES
COUNT EACH IN-BREATH AND OUT-BREATH FROM 7 TO 1...
INHALE, BELLY RISING 7, EXHALE, BELLY FALLING 7
INHALE, BELLY RISING 6, EXHALE, BELLY FALLING 6

Continue counting your breaths down from 7 to 1. If you lose track or get distracted, start again at 7.
Repeat this practice 3-5 times.

SUFFICIENT SLEEP LEADS TO:

INCREASED ALERTNESS

IMPROVED LEARNING

IMPROVED IMMUNITY

IMPROVED MEMORY

GREATER ENDURANCE

BETTER COMMUNICATION

POSITIVE MOOD

LESS RISKY BEHAVIOR

FEWER ACCIDENTS

FEWER HEALTH RISKS

HOW'S YOUR SLEEP *SLANT*?

Environmental factors can degrade sleep.
Improving these factors can boost the recuperative value of sleep.



SURFACE

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Aim to have a soft, yet firm sleeping surface, including mattress, cot and pillows.



LIGHT

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Use darkening shades, if possible. Get 1 hour of bright light exposure upon awakening.



AIR QUALITY

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Clean/replace air filters regularly. Use an air purifier if needed.



NOISE

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Use white noise, loud fans or earplugs.



TEMPERATURE

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Use A/C or heat, if available (65-67° F is optimal). Use blankets and insulation.

Developed by the Behavioral Biology Branch, Center for Military Psychiatry and Neuroscience

For more sleep resources, check out our website:

<https://wrair.health.mil/Biomedical-Research/Center-for-Military-Psychiatry-and-Neuroscience/CMPN-Training-Products/>

We are recruiting healthy volunteers for cutting-edge sleep research studies.

If interested visit <https://wrair.health.mil/Join-a-Study/Sleep-Research-Center/> for more information!

The opinions or assertions contained herein are the private views of the authors and are not to be construed as official.

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