



Sleep is for Every Body

A body that goes a long time without sleep will eventually shut itself down to gain sleep. Sleep interruptions or insomnia can occur for many reasons, including pain associated with an injury or illness, a side effect from the use of medications, and anxiety. Without sufficient sleep, problem-solving ability, cognitive function, and response time can decline, and irritability and mishaps can increase. No amount of caffeine or stimulants can replace the need for sleep. Ideally, most adults need around 7 to 8 hours of uninterrupted sleep for optimal well-being. Review this list below for practical tips and information to aid in restful sleep. If you are unable to sleep several nights a week or for more than a few nights in a row, then you should contact your medical provider. Symptoms of concern include daytime fatigue, trouble concentrating, and mood disturbances. Chronic insomnia can also lead to anxiety and/or depression.

Tips	Strategies and Information
Keep a regular sleep pattern	For example, go to sleep between 10-10:30 p.m. and wake up between 6-6:30 a.m. Your body will set its rhythm to meet a pattern.
Make your environment conducive to sleep	Turn off technology at least 30 minutes before bedtime; darken the room or wear eye covers; use a fan to drown out background noise and cool off.
Avoid alcohol as a sleep aid	Alcohol interferes with deep sleep causing more wakefulness later in the night; it may also interfere with breathing while sleeping by narrowing the passage at the back of the mouth (pharynx).
Stop drinking coffee, energy drinks, or any type of stimulant 5-6 hours before you plan to sleep	Stimulants may block sleep-promoting chemicals; although they are very popular, be cautious with energy drinks. They often have one to three times the amount of caffeine (and/or contain other stimulant properties) as a soft drink.
Prepare mentally and physically before bed with a short ritual or routine	Wash your face with warm water, read a few pages of a favorite book, listen to instrumental music, write in a journal, or stretch. Note: Using electronic devices are not recommended for at least 30 minutes before bed due to the light they emit. Try reading a paperback, not an eReader.
Deep breathing and other relaxation techniques may help with the onset of sleep	Find guided exercises for breathing or relaxation techniques: the NMCPHC – Health Promotion and Wellness website offers an audio library on the Psychological & Emotional Well-Being page.
Naps as short as 10 minutes will help maintain alertness and decrease fatigue	Napping is a great choice when you get less than six hours of sleep in a night. Keep naps between 10- 30 minutes so as not to interrupt regular sleep patterns. Avoid napping within a few hours of your regular bedtime.



Resources

Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center (NMCPHC)

Description: Tools and resources on Sleep for Wounded, Ill, or Injured service members and their families.

Website: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/Pages/Wii-sleep.aspx>

Description: Practical and promotional tool on sleep.

Website: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/Pages/wii-toolbox-sleep.aspx>

Description: The Health Promotion and Wellness Department provides resources for psychological health and emotional well-being as well as an audio library of relaxation techniques.

Website: <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/health-promotion/psychological-emotional-wellbeing/Pages/relaxation.aspx>

American Academy of Sleep Medicine

Description: This site provides a sleep diary and information on sleep.

Website: <http://yoursleep.aasmnet.org/pdf/sleepdiary.pdf>

National Institutes of Health

Description: This link directs you to *Your Guide to Healthy Sleep*, which also includes a sleep diary.

Website: http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/files/docs/public/sleep/healthy_sleep.pdf