



Are you getting enough... sleep?

A lot of people believe that poor sleep is a normal part of aging, but it is not. Older adults over 65; 13 percent men and 36 percent women, take more than 30 minutes to fall asleep (AASM, 2017). The amount of sleep a person needs depends on age, activity level, and general health. Adults who are 18-64, need 7-9 hours of sleep, while, adults who are over 65, need 7-8 hours of sleep. Also, oversleeping can be just as bad for your health. Just because you *can* sleep longer than 12 hours on a daily basis doesn't mean you should.

What is sleep deprivation?

Sleep deprivation occurs when an individual gets less sleep than needed to feel awake and alert.

Effects of sleep deprivation

Long-term effects:

- Drains your mental abilities
- Puts your physical and mental health at risk
- Excessive daytime sleepiness
- Emotional difficulties
- Poor job performance

Effects on your body

- Brain – low concentration, mood change
- Weakened immune system
- High blood pressure
- Risk of heart disease
- Increased risk of diabetes
- Obesity
- Poor balance
- Low sex drive

Signs and symptoms of sleep deprivation

- Yawning
- Moodiness and irritability
- Fatigue
- Depressed mood
- Difficulty learning new concepts
- May cause dehydration
- Forgetfulness
- Inability to concentrate
- Lack of motivation
- Clumsiness
- Increased appetite and carb cravings
- Reduced sex drive



Causes of sleep deprivation

- Intentional- sleep is not a priority
- Unintentional- shift work, family obligations, demanding jobs
- Can be a symptom of an undiagnosed sleep disorder or medical problems
- Consistent sleep-wake patterns
- Medical problems – depression, **obstructive sleep apnea**, hormone imbalances, other chronic illness

Tips for getting more sleep

- Keep the same wake/sleep schedule every day
- Be physically active
- Have a regular downtime routine
- Keep bedroom dark and cool
- Avoid coffee and caffeine
- Avoid naps during the day

For Older Adults also...

- Review your medications and supplements with your doctor or pharmacist
- Stop drinking fluids within two hours of bedtime to minimize trips to the bathroom
- If pain keeps you awake at night, talk to your doctor to see if taking an over-the-counter pain medication before bed may help
- Ease aches and pains that could disrupt your sleep by stretching for a few minutes each morning and at night



For more information or references used, contact Forever...in motion at
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What is Obstructive Sleep Apnea (OSA)?

A condition in which a person stops breathing. It happens because the airway collapses and prevents air from getting into the lungs. Sleep patterns are disrupted, resulting in excessive sleepiness or fatigue during the day.

Treatment for OSA

- Continuous Positive Airway Pressure (CPAP)
- Oral appliances
- Weight loss (if needed)
- Exercise
- Avoid alcohol, sedatives & hypnotics

Alternative home remedies

- Ear plugs, eye masks, white noise
- Weighted blanket
- Aromatherapy/Essential oils
- Massage/Self-massage
- Phone apps (relaxation music, guided imagery)
- Melatonin
- Bed wedge pillow
- Comfort – good mattress (no older than 8 years)

**** Prescription medication should be a last resort!**

