

# Healthy Habits to Improve Your Sleep

If you have trouble falling asleep and staying asleep, it is time to try some healthy sleep habits. You can do many things for a better night's sleep. Try as many tips as you can.

## Healthy Sleep Habits

### During the day, try to:

- **Exercise regularly.** Even 10 minutes of exercise can improve your sleep.
- **Limit your caffeine drinks** to the morning or early afternoon. Caffeine makes it harder to go to sleep and can upset your natural sleep cycle.
- **Make time to meditate.** Meditation can calm the mind and relax the body. Try smartphone apps to guide you.
- **Go to bed and get up at the same time every day,** even on the weekends. A regular sleeping pattern promotes better sleep and supports your natural sleep cycle.
- **Do not eat meals for at least 2 hours before bed.** Give your body time to digest food to support restful sleep.
- **Skip alcohol.** Alcohol impacts the quality of your sleep, leaving you tired the next day.

### Before sleep (30 to 60 minutes), try to:

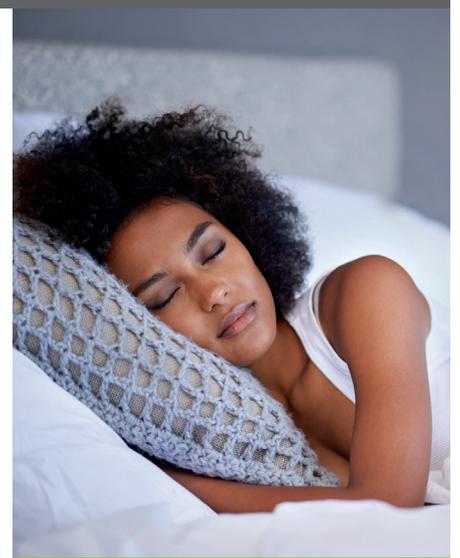
- **Make a relaxing nightly routine.** Try gentle stretching or deep breathing.
- **Stay away from electronic devices** (cellphone, TV, computer). The stimulation and lighting can make it hard to fall asleep.
- **Read or write in a journal.** Writing a to-do list for the next day helps clear the mind.

### Create a good sleep environment:

- **Make your bedroom a relaxing place** used for sleep, intimacy and winding down.
- **Try to keep TVs, computers and work out of your bedroom.**
- **Make the room dark, quiet and cool** but comfortable when going to sleep.

### How Much Sleep Do Adults Need?

Most adults need 7 to 9 hours of sleep each night.



### Sutter Resources

Talk to your healthcare team if you have concerns about your sleep. To learn more about sleep, go to [sutterhealth.org/health/sleep](https://sutterhealth.org/health/sleep).

You may find resources in your area by going to [sutterhealth.org/classes-events](https://sutterhealth.org/classes-events) and selecting the topic "Sleep."

### Did You Know?

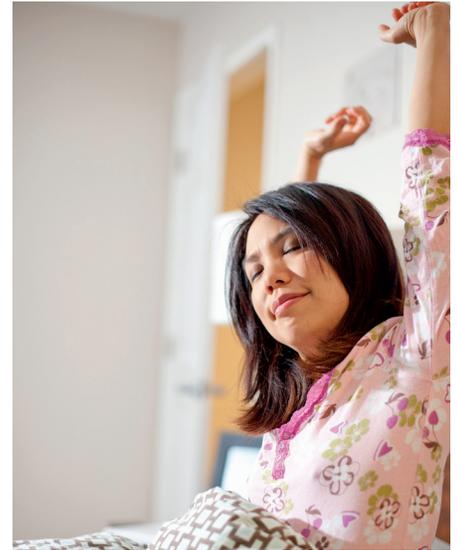
Healthy sleep can help you:

- Improve your mood
- Feel and look better
- Lower your stress
- Have more energy
- Think more clearly

## What if my sleep doesn't get better?

If you try the healthy sleep habits and your sleep does not improve, it could be a sign of a sleep disorder. If you check any of the questions below and this symptom happens regularly, talk to your healthcare provider.

- Do I often feel tired, sleepy or fatigued during the day?
- Do I feel irritable during the day?
- Do I have trouble concentrating?
- Are my reaction times slow?
- Is it difficult for me to stay awake during activities?
- Have I fallen asleep or felt very tired while driving?
- Do I use caffeine as a way to keep myself awake?
- Do I use alcohol as a self-medication tool to fall asleep?
- Do I have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep?
- Do I snore loudly (louder than talking)?
- Has anyone noticed that I stop breathing during my sleep?



## What if I don't get enough sleep?

Over time, lack of sleep can be risky for your health. Not getting enough sleep is linked with many chronic diseases and conditions—such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, obesity and depression. So improving your sleep is key to better health.

## What are treatments for sleep problems?

Treatments for sleep problems focus on the reason why you do not sleep well. If you have a medical problem, treating that problem may help you sleep better.

Doctors may prescribe sleep medicine for a short time if other treatments are not working. Medicines work best as a short-term treatment combined with lifestyle and behavior changes. Prescription sleep medicine comes with risks; be sure to talk with your doctor.