

# HEALTH

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## How much sleep do you need each night?

While we often consider sleep to be a “passive” activity, sufficient sleep is increasingly being recognized as an essential aspect of health promotion and chronic disease prevention in the public health community. Insufficient sleep is associated with a number of chronic diseases and conditions such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity, and depression.

### Sleep Hygiene

The promotion of regular sleep is known as sleep hygiene. Here are some simple sleep hygiene tips:

- Go to bed at the same time each night, and rise at the same time each morning.
- Sleep in a quiet, dark, and relaxing environment, which is neither too hot nor too cold.
- Make your bed comfortable and use it only for sleeping and not for other activities, such as reading, watching TV, or listening to music.
- Remove all TVs, computers, and other "gadgets" from the bedroom.
- Avoid physical activity within a few hours of bedtime.
- Avoid large meals before bedtime.

### Sleep Disorders

Sleep-related difficulties typically called sleep disorders affect many people. Major sleep disorders include:

- **Insomnia** – an inability to fall or stay asleep that can result in functional impairment throughout the day.
- **Narcolepsy** – excessive daytime sleepiness combined with sudden muscle weakness; episodes of narcolepsy are sometimes called "sleep attacks" and may occur in unusual circumstances.
- **Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS)** – an unpleasant "creeping" sensation associated with aches and pains throughout the legs that can make it difficult to fall asleep.
- **Sleep Apnea** – interrupted sleep caused by periodic gasping or "snorting" noises or momentarily suspension of breathing.

If you or someone you know is experiencing a sleep disorder, it may be important to receive an evaluation by a healthcare provider.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

