

It's never too late to develop healthy sleep habits. Considering we spend about one third of our lives sleeping, getting the most out of it is crucial.

Depending on your age group, the quantity of sleep you require will vary. Most adults need approximately 7-8 hours of sleep daily. That number increases dramatically for newborns, children, and teenagers, and it decreases for most people as they age. There may be several factors affecting how well you sleep, some of them more challenging to change, such as fluctuating stress levels due to life circumstances. There are, however, many simple lifestyle guidelines that can lead to waking up more refreshed.

Here are recommendations you might find helpful:

1) Limit or avoid screen time (phone, TV, tablet) 1-2 hours before bedtime.

2) Try to go to bed around the same time, even on weekends, and limit daytime naps.

3) Select a mattress that is comfortably supportive. While a



## A Better Night's Sleep

By: Dr. Annie Gervais  
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mattress should provide firm support for your spine, it should not be too rigid, allowing it to adapt to your body shape.

4) Choose a pillow that allows you to keep your neck and head in line with the rest of your spine, whether lying on your back or side. Avoid pillows that are too thick or thin and lead to improper alignment.

5) Be aware of your sleeping position! It's best not to sleep on your stomach. If you are experiencing pain, placing a

pillow under your knees (while lying on your back) might help reduce the pressure in your back. It may also help to use a pillow between your knees if sleeping on your side.

6) Regular exercise matters when it comes to better sleep! If exercising in the evening, try to finish two hours before bedtime so the increased heart rate does not interfere with your sleep.

7) Don't eat a large meal just before lying down to sleep and limit your intake of caffeinated

beverages (such as tea, coffee and colas) in the evening.

8) Make sure your bedroom is dark and quiet.

9) Bedtime rituals are important, giving your body cues that it is preparing for sleep. Consider reading, playing soft music, and meditating to unwind before lying down.

Just like exercise and diet, sleep plays an important role when it comes to our overall health. Getting adequate quality sleep can improve both your physical and mental health. Simple lifestyle changes and good habits can work wonders, leaving you feeling rejuvenated upon waking up.

### ASK THE EXPERT:

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