

## A young person's guide to be energized by a good night's sleep

Sleep is essential, but many of us, kids and adults alike, don't get enough of it. One of the best ways to get back on track is through better [sleep hygiene](#).

### HOW MUCH SLEEP DO I NEED?

Age of Child	Recommended sleeping hours per 24 hours
Preschoolers (ages 3-5 years)	10-13 hours
Primary school children (ages 6-12 years)	9 - 12 hours
Teenagers (ages 13-17 years)	8 – 10 hours

### WHY SHOULD I GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP?

Sleep is essential for our physical and mental health. Getting enough good quality sleep can improve a young person's quality of life, memory, learning, attention, and behaviour.

Youths who have sufficient sleep tend to do better in school because they have the energy and enthusiasm to enjoy their learning.

In contrast, young people who are sleep deprived often feel moody, tired, easily stressed and have difficulty with concentration.

In other words, if we eat well, exercise regularly and work hard, but don't get enough sleep every night, all our efforts may go to waste!

### WHAT ARE SOME CAUSES OF POOR SLEEP?

#### 1. Lifestyle

Many young people choose not to sleep to watch a midnight show, talk to friends, play computer or video games. Habits like these are simply not wise.

Heavy work commitment and pressure from studies or friends may also hinder sleep and lead to sleep deprivation.

## **2. Medical disorders**

Some medical conditions *such as obstructive sleep apnoea or chronic pains* can lead to disturbed sleep. If you are worried about a medical condition, speak to your parents or doctor about this.

## **HOW DO I ENSURE A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP?**

### ***1. Go to bed and get up at the same time Every Day***

Try not to let these times differ too much. Our body gets used to falling asleep and waking up at a fixed time every day — even on weekends or holidays!

### ***2. Avoid taking naps during the day***

If you must take a nap, keep it within 30 minutes to 45 minutes. Try not to nap in the evening.

### ***3. Set a “technology” curfew***

Leave your phone and all electronic gadgets outside your bedroom when you go to bed. Interactions on social media, playing online games or watching videos

online commonly disrupt the precious sleep time of many young people.

### ***3. Watch what we eat***

Avoid caffeine containing foods or drinks such as tea, colas, coffee, energy drinks and chocolate. Caffeine causes the mind to be stimulated and makes sleeping difficult.

### ***4. Regular exercise***

Exercises taken earlier in the day can help us sleep more easily and soundly. However, heavy exercise in the late afternoons and evenings should be avoided as such activities can make falling asleep at night more difficult.

### ***5. Keep the bedroom quiet, dark, well-ventilated and at a comfortable temperature***

Block out all distracting noise and light. A room that is too hot or too cold can keep us awake. A cool environment is often the most conducive environment for sleeping.

### ***6. The bed should be used for sleeping only***

Try to use the bed only for sleeping. Lying on a bed and doing other activities (e.g.,

watching TV, using a tablet) makes it hard for the brain to associate the bed with sleep.

### ***7. Establish a pre-sleep habit***

This includes activities such as a warm shower, meditation or a few minutes of reading before going to sleep. These habits will get the body ready for rest and sleep.

## References:

- 1) <https://www.healthhub.sg>
- 2) <https://www.singhealth.com.sg/patient-care/patient-education/Documents/sleep-conditions-singhealth.pdf>