



## Fact Sheet

### Sleep is vital to a healthy lifestyle

Sleep is important to leading a healthy and productive lifestyle. In fact, it is as important as a healthy diet and exercise. Experts at the Centers for the Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say sleep plays an important role in learning, performance, memory, regulating metabolism and emotions, and brain recuperation. Lack of sleep can lead to an increased risk of high blood pressure, depression, obesity, diabetes, heart attack, and stroke. Other impacts of poor sleep can include anxiety, poor decision making, lower performance, injuries, accidents, decreased memory, increased alcohol use, reduced family well-being, and lower use of the health care system.

The recommended amount of sleep for an adult is 7 – 8 hours, yet nearly four in ten adults say they don't get that much. The Sleep Foundation recommends steps to improve your sleep practices.

1. Keep the same bedtime and wake time, even on weekends. Consistency helps regulate your body's clock.
2. Practice a relaxing bedtime ritual.
3. Avoid naps, especially in the afternoon.
4. Exercise daily.
5. Design a restful sleep environment. Your bedroom should be between 60 and 67 degrees, dark, and free from noise or distractions.
6. Sleep on a comfortable and supportive mattress and pillows.
7. Use bright light to help manage your circadian rhythms. Avoid bright light in the evening and expose yourself to sunlight in the morning.
8. Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, caffeine, and heavy meals in the evening. Avoid big and spicy meals, and finish eating at least 2 – 3 hours before bedtime.
9. Wind down. Your body needs time to shift into sleep mode, so spend the last hour before bed doing a calming activity such as reading. Avoid electronic devices like tablets, laptops, phones and televisions, which actually put off a type of light that activates the brain.
10. If you can't sleep, go into another room and do something relaxing until you feel tired.

If you continue to have trouble getting solid, restful sleep, talk to your health care provider. Good sleep habits are a vital part of your health.

Learn more at the Phelps/Maries County Health Department. Caring for your family, caring for our community, caring for YOU!



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