



ALASKA

PREMIER

HEALTH

Get Your

Zzzzzzzzzzz

There's nothing like a good night's sleep.

Sleep provides restorative functions like muscle growth, tissue repair, and protein synthesis. Sleep leaves us feeling refreshed and energized, restores us physically and mentally, and enhances our productivity. According to the National Sleep Foundation, adults need between seven and nine hours of sleep.¹ But two-thirds of American adults say they rarely get a good night's sleep on weeknights, averaging less than 7 hours. Many experience sleep problems such as snoring, waking in the night, waking up too early, or feeling unrefreshed when they get up in the morning.² This isn't just a problem of daytime sleepiness: poor sleep takes a toll on our bodies, contributing to obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and heart disease.^{3,4}

tools for success

- Recognize factors that can disrupt natural sleep cycles and lead to obesity and chronic diseases
- Identify sleep habits that can improve your sleep and contribute to long term weight management

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How could a sleep deficit contribute to obesity?

- Short sleep is associated with changes in the hormones that work to keep appetite and satiety in check. Leptin, a hormone which suppresses appetite, *decreases* with short sleep. Ghrelin, a hormone which stimulates appetite, *increases* with inadequate sleep. This disruption to our hormones leads to overeating and weight gain.
- Habitual short sleep leads to more waking hours with extra time to consume more calories.^{6,7}

Sleep Fundamentals

Sleepiness is regulated by our physiological need for sleep and the body's circadian rhythm. Most people feel sleepiest from midnight to 7 am. But many factors can disrupt our natural sleep cycles including:⁵

- Caffeine
- Nicotine
- Alcohol
- Sleep disorders like obstructive sleep apnea or restless leg syndrome
- Hormonal issues causing night time hot flashes
- Psychological disorders and depression
- Exercise too close to bedtime
- Large meals and/or excessive fluid intake too close to bedtime
- Chronic pain
- Medications such as decongestants, steroids, and beta blockers
- Disruptions in the environment such as noise, lighting, and uncomfortable temperatures
- Lack of exposure to daytime sunlight
- Work schedules that require overnight shifts

What can you do to optimize your sleep?

Talk with your clinic staff about any issues that may be affecting your sleep:

- Chronic or acute pain
- Severe snoring or episodes when you briefly stop breathing or seem to be gasping for air
- Restless legs
- Getting up in the middle of the night to eat
- Inability to fall asleep or to stay asleep
- Night sweats or night time hot flashes

It's also helpful to follow these sleep hygiene suggestions to promote a restful night's sleep.⁸

Circle one suggestion from each section that you will sample this week.

<i>Personal lifestyle habits</i>	<i>Arrange your sleep environment for maximum comfort</i>	<i>Bedtime Routines</i>
<input type="checkbox"/> Establish a set time for going to bed and waking and keep those the same, even on weekends. <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid day time napping as much as possible. If you do take a nap, limit it to less than 30 minutes at least 3-4 hours before your bedtime. <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and spicy or heavy foods for 2-3 hours before bedtime. <input type="checkbox"/> Exercise regularly but ideally not within 3 hours of bedtime. <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid drinking fluids after 8 pm to reduce the need to make bathroom trips during the night.	<input type="checkbox"/> Use comfortable bedding that is the correct weight for the season. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep your bedroom at a comfortable temperature, not too hot or too cold. Most people sleep best in a moderately cool room. <input type="checkbox"/> Block out as much noise and light as possible. This may require the use of ear plugs or "white noise machines" and room darkening shades. <input type="checkbox"/> Reserve television viewing and computer work for other rooms as the bright light emitted from these screens is known to disrupt sleep patterns. <input type="checkbox"/> Consider placing your pet in its own bed next to yours. Their movements or pet dander may be disrupting your sleep.	<input type="checkbox"/> Avoid the use of lighted technology devices (computers, tablets, Smart phones, etc.) for 1 hour before bedtime. <input type="checkbox"/> Practice relaxation techniques 15-30 minutes before bedtime. Take a bath or do yoga or deep breathing exercises. <input type="checkbox"/> If worried about your daily life keep you from falling asleep or plague you in the middle of the night, keep a pad of paper and a lighted pen on your nightstand. Use this to write down your concerns or thoughts when you can't sleep. <input type="checkbox"/> If you wake up and can't fall back asleep within 20 minutes, get up and go into another room. Do not turn on bright lights. Sit quietly in a chair, take a bath, or do a quiet activity. Do not watch television or do challenging activities. Try going back to sleep after 30 minutes.

Key Goals

Using the tips in this module, develop 2-3 goals to work towards.

- _____
- _____
- _____

References

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8. *Sleep Hygiene: Helpful Hints to Help You Sleep* at the University of Maryland Medical Center (<http://www.umm.edu/cgi-bin/printpage.cgi>)
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