KNOWLEDGE STOP

GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR SLEEP

According to the latest research, 30 percent of all working adults in the U.S. sleep less than six hours a night. The problem: Not getting enough shut-eye can zap your energy, make it harder to lose weight, and impede your ability to focus. Sleep deprivation can also interfere with memory, mood and may increase your risk for heart disease and stroke.

Lack of sleep prevents you from performing at your best. When the brain is exhausted, it doesn't know whether it's sleepdeprived or starving for glucose, so the natural response is to crave sugar, which is why you have late-night cravings when tired. When you're low on energy, your body wants to conserve it, so motivation to fit in movement is greatly reduced.

Half the trouble with getting enough sleep is actually falling asleep. If you find you're not getting enough sleep each night, use the tips below to fall asleep faster and stay asleep longer.

STEP 01

LOWER YOUR THERMOSTAT

Dropping the thermostat to between 65 and 72 degrees has been shown to help you fall asleep faster and stay asleep longer. While these temperatures are the typical recommendations, try experimenting to find what temperature helps you sleep best.

STEP 02

REGULATE YOUR SLEEP TIME FRAME

Going to sleep and waking up at the same time each day will help you create a routine and regulate your sleep patterns.

STEP 03

BREATHE YOURSELF TO SLEEP

Use a breathing technique to tame your heart rate, blood pressure, and stress levels. Inhale for six counts through your nose, hold for four, and exhale for 10. Repeat this series nine times, or for three minutes.

STEP 04

REMOVE ELECTRONICS

Keep all electronics (phone, computer, TV, etc.) in another room. Having them in your bedroom keeps your brain active and can affect sleep. Using your bedroom for sleeping only will help your body and your brain calm down at night.

STEP 05

SKIP YOUR NIGHTCAP

Downing a drink or two before bed can make it harder for you to fall asleep and stay asleep. It also impacts sleep cycles, negatively influencing your ability to get into REM sleep, which is a highly restorative time within your sleep cycle. This causes you to wake up still feeling exhausted.

STEP 06

MAKE TIME FOR THE GYM

Spend 30 minutes in the morning or afternoon working out. It can help you fall asleep faster at night.

SLEEP BY THE NUMBERS

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, **1 in 3** American adults don't get enough sleep.

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends that adults aged **18–60** years sleep at least **seven** hours each night.

According to the Sleep Research Society, less than **seven** hours of sleep per day is associated with increased risk of obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke.

TALK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER

If you're still fighting sleep after trying all the tips above, talk to your doctor. Unpredictable sleep patterns and lack of sleep can lower your immunity and greatly impact both your mental and physical health.