

Don't skimp on sleep



You have so much to do and so little time to do it. Naturally, you have to find a way to accomplish it all. Do you steal sleep time, thinking one less hour won't hurt you? Think again!

Cutting back on sleep—even one hour—can make it hard to concentrate and slows your response time. When you slack on sleep, your judgment is impaired. This can result in lower performance at work and an increased risk for dangerous situations like car accidents.

Health problems linked to lack of sleep

Skimping on sleep is never a wise decision. Insufficient sleep has been linked to chronic diseases and conditions including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, obesity and depression. Short-changing sleep also negatively impacts your immune system, mood, alertness and the way you think.

The National Sleep Foundation found that 39 percent of American adults get less than seven hours of sleep each night—well below the seven to nine hours recommended by sleep experts. The amount of sleep you get is as important as the quality of your sleep, which should be continuous and without interruptions. You need to have continuous sleep so you'll feel refreshed and alert for the day ahead.

Flip the page to learn more reasons why you need a good night's sleep.



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Lack of sleep takes its toll



Sleep provides the body and the brain with many benefits. Not sleeping enough has serious side effects. Here are six reasons why you should make sure that you are getting enough sleep:

1. **Learning and memory** – Sleep helps the brain commit new information to memory. Research shows that people who sleep after learning and doing mentally challenging tasks do better on tests later.
2. **Metabolism and weight** – Hormones released during sleep affect how the body uses energy. Chronic sleep deprivation may cause weight gain and affect your appetite.
3. **Safety** – Too little sleep contributes to a greater tendency to fall asleep during the daytime for split seconds, causing falls, mistakes and accidents.
4. **Mood** – Lack of sleep can make you irritable, impatient, moody, depressed and unable to concentrate.
5. **Cardiovascular health** – Continued sleep deprivation has been linked to high blood pressure, increased stress hormone levels and irregular heartbeat.
6. **Disease** – Not getting enough sleep alters your immune system. During sleep your body produces hormones that fight infections and repair cells and tissues. If you aren't sleeping as much as you should, you may be more likely to develop chronic diseases and other medical conditions.

