

Lunch at the Library's HEALTH TIP OF THE WEEK



This healthy tip of the week was adapted from "KidsHealth from Nemours," kidshealth.org/en/parents/strong-bones.html. For more tips, visit kernlibrary.org or kidshealth.org.

Sleep and Teenagers

How Much Sleep Do Teens Need?

Most teens need about 8 to 10 hours of sleep each night. Getting the right amount of sleep is important for anyone who wants to do well on a test or play their best in sports. Unfortunately, many teens don't get enough sleep.

Why Don't Teens Get Enough Sleep?

Teens often get a bad rap for staying up late, oversleeping for school, and falling asleep in class. But teen sleep patterns are different from those of adults or younger kids. During the teen years, the body's circadian rhythm (an internal biological clock) is reset, telling a person to fall asleep later and wake up later. This change is likely due to the brain hormone melatonin, which is released later at night for teens than it is for kids and adults. This can make it harder for teens to fall asleep early. Changes in the body's circadian rhythm coincide with a busy time in life. For most teens, the pressure to do well in school is more intense and it's harder to get by without studying hard. And teens have other time demands — everything from sports and other extracurricular activities to working a part-time job. Using electronics — including phones, tablets, and computers — also makes it hard to fall sleep. Many teens are up late texting friends, playing games, and watching videos. Early school start times also play a role in lost sleep. Teens who fall asleep after midnight still have to get up early for school, meaning that they might squeeze in only 6 or 7 hours, or less, of sleep a night. A few hours of missed sleep a night may not seem like a big deal, but it can create a noticeable sleep deficit over time.

How Can I Get More Sleep?

Here are some things that may help you to sleep better: Set regular bed and wake up times. Try to stick to your sleep schedule. Exercise regularly. Avoid caffeine. Unwind by keeping the lights low. Turn off electronics. Don't nap too much. Create the right sleeping environment.



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