



HELPING HANDS



The ABC's of Sleep

(excerpts from NIH MedLinePlus Magazine, magazine.medlineplus.gov)

What is sleep?

While you are sleeping, you are unconscious, but your brain and body functions are still active. Sleep is a complex biological process that helps you process new information, stay healthy, and feel rested.

During sleep, your brain cycles through five stages: stage 1, 2, 3, 4, and rapid eye movement (REM) sleep. Different things happen during each stage. For example, you have a different pattern of brain waves during each one. Your breathing, heart, and temperature may be slower or faster in some stages. Certain phases of sleep help you

- Feel rested and energetic the next day
- Learn more readily, gain insight, and form memories effectively
- Rejuvenate your heart and vascular system
- Release more growth hormone, which helps children grow. It also boosts muscle mass and the repairing of cells and tissues in children and adults.
- Keep from getting sick or help you get better when you are sick, by creating more cytokines (hormones that help the immune system fight various infections)



How can I get better sleep?

You can take steps to improve your sleep habits. First, make sure that you allow yourself enough time to sleep. With enough sleep each night, you may find that you're happier and more productive during the day.

To improve your sleep habits, it also may help to

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day
- Avoid caffeine and nicotine especially in the afternoon and evening
- **Exercise** regularly, but don't exercise too late in the day
- Avoid alcoholic drinks before bed
- Avoid large meals and beverages late at night
- Don't take a nap after 3 p.m.
- Relax before bed, for example by taking a bath, reading or listening to relaxing music
- Keep the temperature in your bedroom cool
- Get rid of distractions such as noises, bright lights, and a TV or computer in the bedroom. Also, don't be tempted to go on your phone or tablet just before bed.
- Don't lie in bed awake; if you can't sleep for 20 minutes, get up and do something relaxing
- See a doctor if you have continued trouble sleeping. You may have a sleep disorder, such as insomnia or sleep apnea.

How much sleep do I need?

The amount of sleep you need depends on several factors, including your age, lifestyle, health, and whether you have been getting enough sleep recently. The general recommendations for sleep are



- Newborns: 16-18 hours a day
- Preschool-aged children: 11-12 hours a day
- School-aged children: At least 10 hours a day
- Teens: 9-10 hours a day
- Adults (including older adults): 7-8 hours a day

Teenagers' biological clocks shift, and they are more likely to go to bed later than younger children and adults, and they tend to want to sleep later in the morning. This delayed sleep-wake rhythm conflicts with the early-morning start times of many high schools and helps explain why most teenagers do not get enough sleep. Some people think that adults need less sleep as they age. But there is no evidence to show that older adults can get by with less sleep than people who are younger. As people age, however, they often get less sleep or they tend to spend less time in the deep, restful stage of sleep. Older adults are also more easily awakened. And it's not just the number of hours of sleep you get that matters. The quality of the sleep you get is also important. People whose sleep is frequently interrupted or cut short might not get enough of certain stages of sleep.

IAM Peer Employee Assistance Program



The heart and soul of the District 141 Employee Assistance Program is the local lodge EAP peer coordinator. These dedicated men and women volunteer their personal time to assist other union members and their families who are experiencing personal difficulties. EAP peer coordinators do not make clinical diagnoses or clinical evaluations, however, they are trained to make a basic assessment of your situation and refer you to an appropriate resource for a more detailed evaluation. EAP peer coordinators will follow up to ensure you have been able to access services that addressed the difficulty you were experiencing.

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EAP Calendar

EAPA Convention

September 25-27

St Louis, Missouri

St. Louis Union Station Hotel

EAP IV

October 27-31

Please contact your Local Lodge Secretary/Treasurer or Local Lodge President for information about enrolling in any EAP course