



How to... *zzzzzz*

WAKING UP!

New research suggests that hitting the snooze button can help those with morning drowsiness feel more awake after getting up.



Get a good night's sleep

Increasing the time you spend resting can help you feel happier and healthier.

Most tweens and teens need about nine to 11 hours of sleep every night to be their healthiest and do their best in school. However, most kids this age get much less. There are many reasons, including homework, evening activities, and socializing with friends. Here's how you can get a better night's sleep.

Have a set bedtime

When you go to sleep at the same time every night, your body gets used to the schedule and you fall asleep more easily. To figure out what your bedtime should be, think about when you have to wake up and work backward. If you want to get 10 hours of sleep and have to wake up at 7 a.m., you would need to go to sleep at 9 p.m.

Wind down before bed

Give yourself a full hour to relax before bedtime so your body and mind are ready for sleep. You can split the hour into three 20-minute segments this way: 20 minutes to prepare for the next day (pack your school bag, lay out your clothes, fill your water bottle, and so on), 20 minutes for hygiene (shower and brush your teeth), and 20 minutes to

relax (read a book, draw, or listen to calming music). Make sure your sleep space is comfortable, whether that means slipping into a made bed or curling up under your favorite blanket.

Avoid sleep stealers

Things you eat, drink, and do during the day can also affect your sleep schedule. Try to avoid food and beverages with caffeine (tea, coffee, chocolate) in the afternoon and evening, and don't eat a heavy snack close to bedtime. Exercise can help you feel more tired, but working out within a couple of hours before bedtime can make it hard for you to wind down. Try not to send messages, scroll through your phone, watch YouTube, or play video games right before bed because the light from screens can trick your body into thinking it's daytime.

Be patient

It can take two weeks—or even longer—for your new sleep routine to work. If you can't fall asleep after 20 minutes of lying in bed, it's OK to get up and do something else for a while, like sitting in a comfortable chair to read, until you feel more tired.



A regular routine is key.

Why it's important



More sleep can help you be your best self. First, studies show that getting enough sleep helps improve your mood and even makes you happier.

Sleep can also help keep you from getting sick. As you sleep, your body produces cytokines, a type of protein that helps your body fight illnesses. Without enough sleep—or cytokines—you could be more likely to get ill and be sick longer.

Another benefit of sleep: It helps make you stronger, both mentally and physically. More sleep has been shown to help improve your memory, and it makes you stronger by giving your muscles and mind time to grow and recover.