



Sleep Tips

Your health is important.

Because the Youens and Duchicela Clinic believes this, the following is brought to you in an effort to provide wellness information that you can use to help manage and maintain your health.

This week, the focus is on sleep.

With the change from Daylight Savings Time, the evening hours seem to approach more quickly. And these darkened hours are an appropriate time to reflect on your body's sleep habits.

Individuals have varied sleep patterns and varied needs of rest. While there is no "magic number" for the amount of sleep individuals should get each night, the National Sleep Foundation does provide a guide:

TODDLERS: 12–14 hours

PRESCHOOLERS: 11–13 hours

SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN: 10–11 hours

TEENS: 8.5–9.25 hours

ADULTS: 7–9 hours

The Foundation further suggests that one ask questions in order to determine individual sleep needs. Consider your own answers to the following:

- Are you productive, healthy, and happy on seven hours of sleep, or do you feel more rested with nine hours?
- Do you have health issues which may cause you to desire more sleep? Are you at risk for a disease?
- Are you currently experiencing sleep problems?



- Do you depend on caffeine to get you through the day?
- Do you feel sleepy while driving?

Speaking to a doctor can also help you determine the optimal number of hours you should strive for sleep per night and could aid in diagnosing any potential problems that may be inhibiting your quality of sleep.

But if you feel as if you are simply not achieving optimal rest, The National Sleep Foundation does offer the following tips to aid in better sleep:

- Establish consistent sleep and wake schedules, even on weekends
- Create a regular, relaxing bedtime routine at least one hour before the time you expect to fall asleep
- Create a sleep-conducive environment that is dark, quiet, comfortable, and cool
- Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillows
- Avoid “sleep stealers” like a television, computer, or books in your bedroom
- Finish eating at least 2-3 hours before your regular bedtime
- Exercise regularly during the day or at least a few hours before bedtime
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol products close to bedtime
- Give up smoking

Implementing some of these tips is a great way to enjoy more productive, healthy awake hours.

Stay positive as you strive to assess—and improve—your sleep patterns. Remember that you can get the sleep your body needs; just commit to making good sleep a priority!

For more information on these and other tips, see www.sleepfoundation.org/.

The information provided here is not to be used as a substitute for medical attention. Remember that, should you have specific medical questions or desire more information, contact your doctor.