

# SLEEP YOUR WAY TO BETTER HEALTH

Quality sleep is extremely important for your overall health. Read more for tips to ensure you get the good night's sleep you need.

## NO BLUE LIGHTS BEFORE BED!

After a late night gig or a long day at work many of us blow off steam by noodling around on social media, playing games on our cell phones or binge watching television. Lately, however, scientists warn [against using these “blue” light-emitting devices before bed.](#)



**WHY?** The light from our devices is “short-wavelength-enriched,” it affects levels of the sleep-inducing hormone melatonin more than any other wavelength. [This shift in our sleep patterns can have devastating health effects on our body.](#)

## THE DANGER OF NOT GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP



Not getting enough sleep results in a higher risk of heart attack, stroke, depression, high blood pressure, and infections. Weight gain and risk of type-2 diabetes is also related to a lack of sleep.

[www.healthline.com/health/sleep-deprivation/effects-on-body](http://www.healthline.com/health/sleep-deprivation/effects-on-body)

## HOW MUCH SLEEP DO YOU NEED?



According to Sleep Health: The Journal of the National Sleep Foundation.

**ADULTS (18-64):** 7-9 hours

**OLDER ADULTS (65+):** 7-8 hours

## WHY YOU NEED SLEEP

Did you know that while you sleep, your brain releases hormones to build muscle mass, fight infection, regulate your weight and repair tissues?

Good sleep improves memory and impacts hunger and our ability to feel full after meals. *(When we haven't slept it “triggers” our brain's reward center causing food cravings.)*

## HOW DO YOU KNOW IF YOU GET ENOUGH SLEEP?

If you feel refreshed upon waking and remain alert throughout the day, it's a good sign you're getting enough sleep.

# 10 KEYS TO ENSURE YOU GET GOOD SLEEP



Expose yourself to lots of bright light during the day, which will boost your ability to sleep at night, as well as your mood and alertness during daylight.



Make sure you have 30 mins of physical activity every day: dance, go to the gym or take a walk!



Don't drink caffeinated beverages within 5 hours of the time you wish to go to sleep.



Avoid tobacco and 2nd hand smoke, as it causes you to sleep lightly and wake up early.



If you must look at electronic devices at night, consider wearing blue-blocking glasses. Avoid looking at bright screens beginning 2-3 hours before bed.



Never drink alcoholic beverages at night. Alcohol prevents deep sleep and tends to wake you up in the middle of the night when the effects wear off.



Eat your largest meal in the middle of the day. Heavy meals within 3 hours of bedtime can cause indigestion and disrupt sleep.



Watch your intake of all liquids before bed, as frequent middle of the night bathroom visits disrupts the quality of sleep.



Improve your sleep environment. Make your bedroom a sanctuary from stress, free from computers, cell phones and distractions.



Establish a bedtime routine so your body associates your bed with falling asleep. Avoid your bed when you're not sleepy.

**CONTACT YOUR HEALTH PROVIDER IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE SLEEPING.**

# THE LINK BETWEEN LACK OF SLEEP & DIABETES

## DID YOU KNOW THAT SLEEP LOSS MAY LEAD TO HIGHER BLOOD SUGAR LEVELS?

Sleep loss is associated with “insulin resistance.” Insulin is a hormone that helps lower blood sugar. Insulin resistance is a condition where the body is not able to use insulin properly – this can lead to higher blood sugars.

Lack of sleep has been linked to an increased risk for diabetes. Frequent sleep loss is also associated with higher risk for obesity, heart disease, blood pressure and stroke. If someone already has diabetes, constant lack of sleep may worsen diabetes.

## DID YOU KNOW THAT PEOPLE WITH DIABETES HAVE A HIGHER RISK OF SLEEP DISORDERS?

Many people with diabetes suffer from sleep disorders such as obstructive sleep apnea and restless leg syndrome.

People with type 2 diabetes have a 50-50 chance of having obstructive sleep apnea (OSA). OSA is a breathing disorder where the airway is blocked when the mouth and throat relax during sleep. This can happen many times during sleep causing pauses in breathing that can last more than 10 seconds. Other risk factors for OSA are smoking or being overweight. OSA can worsen diabetes symptoms and is associated with high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke. Snoring can be a sign of OSA. Losing weight can help resolve OSA.

Restless leg syndrome (RLS) has been associated with high blood sugars and kidney problems, among other things. With RLS the person has an uncontrollable urge to move the legs before falling asleep. Other symptoms can include a throbbing, pulling, crawling or tingling sensation. These painful sensations can keep the person from a restful sleep.

Although not a sleep disorder, diabetic neuropathy can also cause a person to lose sleep. Neuropathy is a type of nerve damage that can occur with diabetes. With peripheral neuropathy, the most common type, people may feel numbness or a tingling and burning sensation that is worse at night.

## LESS SLEEP = HIGH BLOOD SUGAR HIGH BLOOD SUGAR = LESS SLEEP

## DID YOU KNOW THAT HIGH BLOOD SUGAR CAN BE A RED FLAG FOR SLEEP PROBLEMS AMONG PEOPLE WITH DIABETES?

As noted above, lack of sleep has been linked to insulin resistance which can increase blood sugar. Sleep loss is linked to weight gain which can also lead to higher blood sugars. Lack of sleep affects the appetite. When you are tired you will want to eat more because your body seeks energy.

On the flip side, if your blood sugar is not at target it can lead to poor sleep. If your sugar is too high, your kidneys try to get rid of the extra sugar in the urine. This can result in frequent trips to the bathroom during the night. High blood sugar can also cause thirst, hunger and headaches which can also wake you up during the night.

Low blood sugar can cause restless sleep by causing nightmares, night sweats, headaches and hunger.

Getting a good night's sleep is yet another reason to get your blood sugar in control. If your blood sugar is not at target, work with your medical provider to figure out the reason it is not at goal. What you eat is very important, but there are other things that can affect your sugar. Your schedule, medications, level of physical activity and stress can also make a difference.

## THE SOUND SLEEP INITIATIVE



In 2016, the New Orleans Musicians' Clinic and Assistance Foundation partnered with [Doerr Furniture](#) and [WVOZ New Orleans](#) to create the Sound Sleep Initiative. The SSI provides one mattress a week to local performers who need it most. The life of a working musician typically involves stress, late nights and irregular sleeping schedules. Lack of sleep can have serious overall health consequences, so the NOMC, DOERR and WVOZ have banded together to ensure local performers' stay healthy and get the good night sleep they need.

This partnership encourages wellness among compliant patients of the New Orleans Musicians' Clinic. If you'd like to learn more, email [info@nomaf.org](mailto:info@nomaf.org).