



FOR
YOUR OWN
GOOD

THE MANUAL FOR
BETTER MEN'S HEALTH

BY
EL CAMINO HOSPITAL



SLEEP

YOUR HEALTH IS RESTING ON IT

Sleep can seem like the least of your health concerns — until you don't get enough. The fallout from chronic sleep loss can affect not only your health but your work, your relationships and even your sex life.

Millions of people in the U.S. have trouble sleeping, and the reasons are often obvious — do you really need that caffeinated drink in the evening? In some cases, though, sleep loss results from issues that are tougher to uncover.

Either way, it's important to find out what's keeping you up so you can start getting the rest you need.

HOW MUCH SLEEP DO WE NEED EACH DAY?

- Infants: 14 to 17 hours.
- Toddlers: 11 to 14 hours.
- School-age kids: Nine to 12 hours.
- Teenagers: Eight to 10 hours.
- Adults: Seven to nine hours.



ROADBLOCKS TO GOOD SLEEP

Everyone has trouble sleeping once in a while. You may be able to track the problem down by examining your lifestyle. Temporary sleep loss can result from:

- Working at night.
- Lack of exercise.
- Smoking
- Drinking alcohol or caffeine.
- Stress

An underlying health issue, such as being overweight or pain from an injury or arthritis, can also disturb your sleep. So can gastroesophageal reflux (GERD), which can cause heartburn when you lie down.

If you consistently have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, you may have one of these chronic sleep disorders:

- **Narcolepsy.** With this disorder, you may have difficulty staying asleep and feel extremely sleepy during the day.
- **Obstructive sleep apnea, or OSA.** People with OSA temporarily stop breathing during sleep — sometimes hundreds of times a night. It's more common among men and can cause loud snoring and gasping.
- **Parasomnias.** These include abnormal behaviors such as sleepwalking, sleep-related eating disorder (getting up and eating without waking) and REM sleep disorder. They're most common in middle-aged or older men.
- **Insomnia.** This includes temporary or long-term problems with falling asleep, staying asleep or both.
- **Restless legs syndrome, or RLS.** This uncomfortable disorder involves tingling, burning or cramping sensations in your legs and an irresistible urge to move them. RLS is more common as you get older.

People with sleep disorders usually get better with treatment. Look for a comprehensive sleep disorders program with an accredited sleep lab.

WHAT MISSING SLEEP CAN DO

If you're not getting enough sleep, your friends and family may notice the results before you do. Chronic sleep loss can make you anxious, sad and quick to get angry. You may also be forgetful and more likely to make mistakes at work or school. Some studies have linked sleep apnea to erectile dysfunction and heart problems.

Lack of sleep can also lead to:

- Higher risks for obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure.
- Increased vulnerability to infections such as colds and the flu.
- Cardiovascular problems such as heart arrhythmia, stroke and heart disease.
- Seizures in people with some types of epilepsy.
- Traffic and other accidents.



TAKE CHARGE OF YOUR SLEEP

Lack of sleep can fog your brain, and it's easy to feel overwhelmed. Don't give in! Now's the time to make changes that can improve your sleep.

Take a good look at your everyday habits, and determine which of these can help:

- **Avoid large meals late in the day**, and stay away from spicy foods.
- **Don't have anything with caffeine after lunch.** Caffeine can keep you awake up to 12 hours after you eat or drink it.
- **Skip the nightcap.** Alcohol causes restless sleep with frequent awakenings.
- **Don't smoke.** Nicotine cravings can wake you up.
- **Ask your doctor** if any of your medications or supplements could be disturbing your sleep.
- **Get regular exercise**, but not late in the day.
- **Establish a regular sleep routine.** That means going to bed at the same time every day.
- **Get to a healthy weight.** Being overweight can contribute to sleep apnea or make it worse.
- **Make your bedroom quiet**, dark and cool.
- **Keep electronics out of your bedroom.** This includes computers, tablets, cell phones and TV.
- **If you find yourself sleepless, don't stay in bed.** You're likely to get anxious about losing sleep, which can make it worse. Instead, get up and go to another room.
- **Try meditation.** A practice called mindfulness meditation can help you let go of everyday concerns and relax.

HOW TO CHOOSE A SLEEP CENTER

Look for a center that:

- Is accredited by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine.
- Has a comprehensive staff of sleep medicine doctors and other sleep experts.
- Has a sleep lab that is comfortable and provides hotel-like conveniences.
- Can schedule your sleep study to fit your schedule.

The results can uncover your sleep disorder and point to treatments that can improve your sleep. Treatments may include:

- Short-term use of sleep-aid medicines. Some sleep disorders require longer-term medication.
- Cognitive behavioral therapy to stop racing thoughts and settle your mind for sleep.
- Continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) therapy for sleep apnea. This delivers mild air pressure through a mask to keep airways open during sleep.
- Oral appliances to help with sleep apnea by keeping airways open.
- Surgery to reshape or reposition the jaws, tongue and other upper-airway structures. This is used when other treatments for sleep apnea haven't worked.

GETTING HELP FROM THE PROS

If you've done what you can and you're still not sleeping well, it's time to turn to the experts. Sleep disorder programs can diagnose and treat the full range of sleep disorders and get you started toward healthy sleep.

Treatment at a sleep center usually starts with an evaluation by a sleep medicine doctor and other specialists. If your doctor suspects that you have a sleep disorder, he or she may recommend a sleep study, or polysomnography. This overnight test monitors things like your eye movements, oxygen saturation (the amount of oxygen your red blood cells are carrying), brain waves, muscle movements and the electrical activity of your heart as you sleep.



Get the sleep you need. Don't buy into the myth that you can get everything done if you just sleep less. In fact, you'll get more done — and feel better while you're doing it — when you get enough sleep. The [sleep experts at El Camino Hospital](#) can help. Call [408-866-4070](tel:408-866-4070) to make an appointment.

ONLINE RESOURCES *FOR* MEN'S HEALTH

USE THESE RESOURCES
TO LEARN MORE ABOUT
STAYING HEALTHY

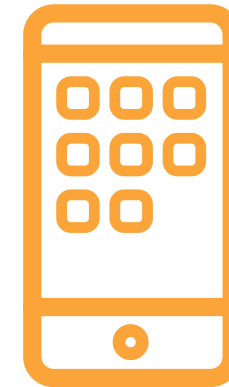
SLEEP HEALTH

[Sleep Apnea.](#) Find out how this disorder raises the risk for a number of serious conditions.

[Sleep FAQ.](#) Get answers to common questions about sleep.

[Sleep Health.](#) Learn how sleep experts at El Camino Hospital diagnose and treat sleep disorders.

[Snoring and Health Risks: A Wake-Up Call.](#) Find out how snoring is linked to a number of serious conditions.





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A-0401_MensHealthGuide Jan19