

Alaska Sleep Education Center

Why am I So Tired All the Time, Even After a Full Night's Sleep?

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Do you often go through the day feeling sleepy, sluggish, and lethargic, even after a full night's rest? While it's common to occasionally feel dead tired during the day, persistent symptoms of [daytime drowsiness](#) could be linked to your sleep and health habits.

There are a couple of possible reasons why you may be experiencing daytime drowsiness, and we want to help you better understand what you can do to start feeling bright-eyed and bushy-tailed every day.

Getting the Right Amount of Nightly Sleep

So you regularly get 8 hours of sleep every night but you still feel tired during the day. What's the deal? For starters, **the 8 hour sleep guideline is just that—a guideline.**

Yes, the 8 hours of sleep standard has been routinely researched to be the number of hours of sleep that most people need. However, it doesn't always work for everybody, and you may need to adjust it a little to get it right for you.

Fine-tune your body's clock

Too much sleep can be just as bad as too little sleep. It's important to dial in your personal body clock so that you feel refreshed and ready to tackle the day, everyday.

To do this, figure out what time you need to get up in the morning.

Count back 7.5 hours as a good time to start getting to bed.

7.5 hours is a good benchmark because the average person goes through five 90 minute sleep cycles alternating between sleep (non-REM) and deep sleep (REM).

It's best to wake in-between deep sleep cycles rather than in the middle of one. Waking in the middle of REM can lead you to feeling groggy during the day. If you wake during non-REM you're more likely to feel alert and attentive as the day progresses.

Try this 7.5 hours sleep duration for 3 days. If you find yourself waking about 10 minutes before your alarm goes off, you've found your perfect bedtime. If however you're still relying on your alarm clock to wake you up, try moving your bedtime back 15 minutes every 3 days until you find yourself waking just a few minutes before your alarm goes off.

Once you find your body's perfect internal sleep-clock, stay consistent with it. The less you vary from the norm, the more alert you will be during the day and the better you will function.

Practice better sleep habits

If you find yourself having difficulty getting to bed on time every night, there are a [few things you can do to help you get to bed quicker:](#)

- **Ditch your electronics.** This may be the simplest yet hardest habit to break. The artificial light emitting from your cellphone, tablet, laptop, television set, e-reader, portable game console, etc, tricks your brain into believing it needs to stay awake because it associates light with daytime. This deception can disrupt your circadian rhythm, which in turn leads to poorer sleep at night and feeling rundown during the day.
- **Keep your room dark and quiet.** Ditching those electronics may not be enough to create the ideal sleeping quarters. If possible, turn off all lights. If this is not possible, leave one dim light on or use a nightlight.



- **Try using "white noise."** Listening to music to help you get to bed may work for you, but it's also likely to disrupt your sleep, causing more problems than it solves. If you must listen to music, try setting it on a timer that will shut it off shortly after you fall asleep. A better option is to listen to white noise while you sleep. White noise from a fan or a sound-machine creates a consistent rhythmic sound that can be both relaxing and help drown out other sudden noises that may cause you to wake at night.
- **Avoid caffeine before bed.** This one should be a no-brainer, but many people have a hard time resisting caffeinated beverages before bedtime. Caffeine is a stimulant and will increase alertness at that crucial time when your body wants to wind down. If you are a habitual caffeine user, try avoiding using caffeine three hours before bedtime to help get you to sleep on time.



A Healthier Lifestyle Leads to Healthier Sleep

Diet and exercise can go a long way towards getting better rest at night and being more alert during the day. Balancing healthy eating choices with routine exercise can dramatically affect the way you perform throughout the day.

Foods to Avoid to Improve Sleep

- **Foods high in sugar and caffeine** can have a temporary energy-boosting effect on the mind and body's alertness, but is often followed by a crashing feeling that can last much longer than the short energy-surge you were after.
- **Fatty foods and processed carbs** have also been associated with daytime sleepiness. These foods may fill you up but they're not loaded with the vitamins and nutrients your body needs to produce ample amounts of energy.
- **Spicy foods close to bedtime.** Spicy foods are notorious for causing heartburn, indigestion, and acid reflux. Heartburn can be made worse while lying down as it allows the acids to creep up into the esophagus and burn the sensitive lining.

For a thorough article on foods and sleep [click here](#).

Increase Quality Sleep with Healthy Choices

- **Eat more healthy foods.** Eating more foods that naturally boost your daily energy levels can go a long way in helping you feel more alert everyday. Eat more natural, unprocessed carbs. Eat foods that are rich in antioxidants, amino acids, proteins and high in vitamins. A short list of high energy foods would be: leafy greens, whole grains, tree nuts, lean meats, eggs, fruits (especially apples, bananas, and blueberries), and bell peppers just to name a few.

- **Exercise more.** Routine exercise can go a long way in curing your daytime fatigue. Exercise breeds energy. It is recommended that you exercise at least 40 minutes a day, 4 days a week. Aside from the energy boost you'll experience, exercise also releases endorphins which will leave you simply "feeling good" about yourself.



Poor sleep could be a sign of a sleep disorder

If you practice the above guidelines of a healthier lifestyle and better sleeping habits but still find yourself suffering from **daytime drowsiness**, it may be a sign of a more severe medical condition such as: **obstructive sleep apnea (OSA)**, anemia, thyroid problems, **narcolepsy**, depression, **restless leg syndrome**, undiagnosed heart disease, or deficiencies in key nutrients. If you think that you may be suffering from one of these medical conditions you should contact your physician or local sleep clinic immediately.

And remember, you can always contact us here at The Alaska Sleep Clinic for questions or to schedule a consultation.

<http://www.alaskasleep.com/blog/why-tired-after-full-nights-sleep>