

4 Quick Fixes for Your Sleep Problems



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Do you dread going to sleep, even when you're completely exhausted? Does relaxing and going to bed feel like a chore? Do you find it tiresome to go about your day because you haven't had a good night's sleep?

You're not alone in your night-to-night battle. In fact, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), insufficient sleep is a growing problem in today's world and the majority of sufferers are over the age of 65.

The CDC survey has identified six common consequences of poor sleep reported by adult respondents. Namely, sleep troubles result in difficulties concentrating on things, remembering things, working on hobbies, driving or taking public transportation, taking care of financial affairs, and performing employed or volunteer work. Of course, all these factors contribute to deteriorating quality of everyday life.

But more than that, the complications of sleeping troubles can be dangerous, and even life-threatening. Drowsy driving is a perfect, yet terrifying example. The National Department of Transportation estimates that drowsy driving is the reason for 1,550 fatalities and 40,000 nonfatal injuries every year in the U.S.

You may think poor sleep is simply impairing your ability to think clearly and concentrate, but your general health is vastly affected by lack of shuteye, too. Seven to 8 hours of sleep every night is recommended for maintaining good health. Sleeping more or less than this norm has been linked

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The good news is, sleep disorders are not permanent and can be rectified.

to serious health complications in numerous studies.

You see, sleep is of vital importance for your health and well-being. This is the time when new information is consolidated and memories are filed, the time for relaxation and regeneration, the time when our body heals and repairs itself. So it comes as no surprise that sleep insufficiency is associated with an increased risk of diabetes, depression, obesity, cancer, premature aging, and early death.

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This report will help you achieve better sleep night

after night with simple and natural fixes. You will learn how to de-stress and create an environment promoting a good sleep. We will discuss four quick fixes to help resolve your sleeping problems, but first let's take a closer look at some of the health complications linked to poor sleep.

Complications of poor sleep

Sleep is meant to be the time when the body can break free from the daily stresses. If the body doesn't have that opportunity to restore and recharge itself, it cannot function to the best of its ability and some of the key processes may suffer as a result. Below are some of the common consequences of chronic poor sleep.

Heart health issues: Poor sleep negatively affects the heart. In one large study, researchers found that participants sleeping for less than 5 hours a night had a 45% increased risk for heart attacks. The study also showed that lack of sleep increases blood pressure — even one night of poor sleep in healthy young people



is known to have resulted in significant temporary changes.

Skin problems: Lack of sleep will show up on your face, and it's not just about puffy eyes. The longer you go without proper sleep, the more permanent the changes are. Studies have shown that lack of sleep can speed up the appearance of aging, so even if you feel young you'll look much older.

Poor sex drive: If your libido has taken a hit, don't blame aging – blame your poor sleep. Lack of sleep can reduce your libido, and if you're a male you should know that poor sleep results in decreased production of testosterone.

Hair loss: Poor sleep quality translates into poor hair health, contributing to thinning hair and even baldness.

Weight gain: Losing weight becomes harder as you age, but it becomes a real challenge if you're not sleeping. Sleeping helps control important hormones that trigger hunger, and when you don't sleep, you end up constantly craving for food due to the resulting hormone misbalance.

Memory problems: Sleep deprivation can drastically impact your memory, so if you're concerned about your deteriorating cognitive function, get some quality shuteye.

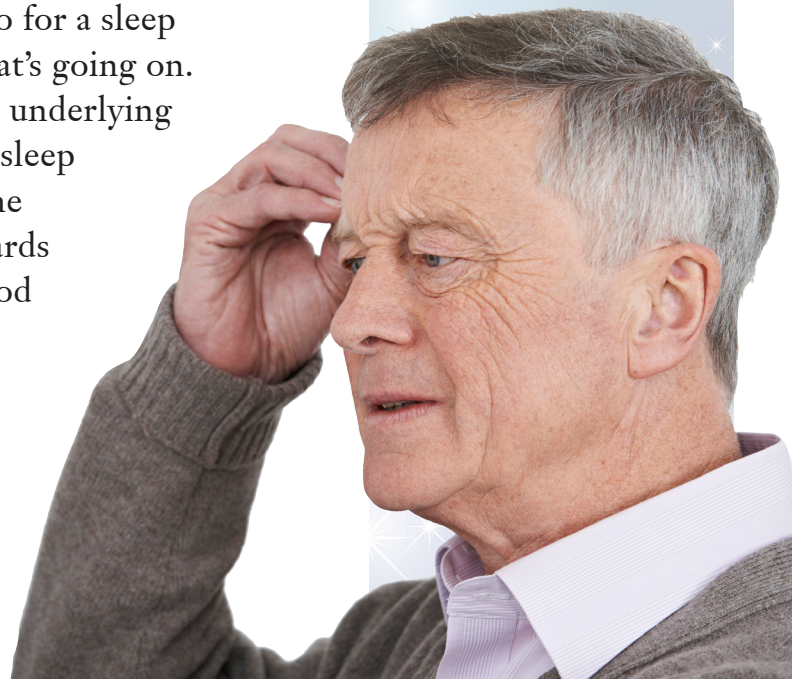
Loss of muscle mass: Despite working out, you may not be making any muscle gains if you're not sleeping. Without sleep (especially REM sleep), you can't increase muscle mass, so it doesn't matter how many hours you're spending at the gym, those efforts are going to waste.

Chronic health conditions: Numerous studies have tied sleep deprivation to diabetes, stroke, and even early death.

Speak to your doctor about any concerns you have about your sleep. Go for a sleep test to see what's going on. Detecting the underlying cause of your sleep problems is the first step towards enjoying a good night's rest once again.

**Common
causes
of sleep**

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problems

According to the National Sleep Foundation, 71% of people aged 50 to 64 experience some sleep problems. As you can see, sleep insufficiency is not just the plague of the elderly. Sleeping problems can start early on, too.

So, what's keeping you up at night?

You fall asleep early and wake up early

No matter how hard you try, you simply can't stay up anymore. Worse yet, because you went to bed too early, you're up way too early, too. When we are in our 20s, our circadian

rhythm is delayed, meaning, we are "programmed" to stay awake and sleep in. As we get older, this rhythm changes, so we fall asleep earlier.

You wake up frequently throughout the night

Older people often complain about not being able to stay asleep throughout the night. Research suggests this has to do with changes in brain waves. By the time we hit 50, restorative brain waves do not spike as much as they did when we were younger, which means we can wake up much easier.

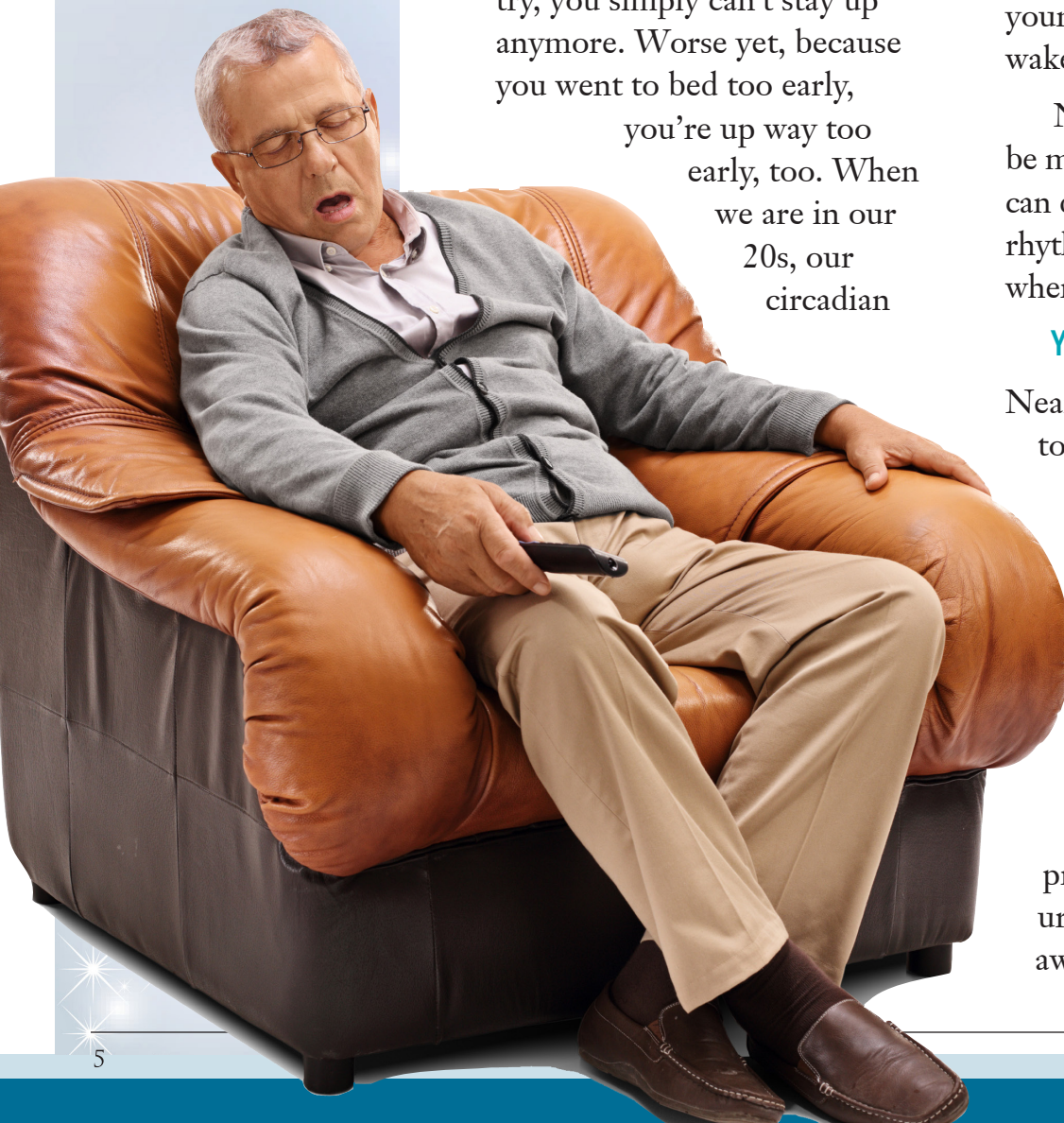
Napping can combat this, but be mindful – too much napping can disrupt your circadian rhythm, so save it for those days when you are really drained.

You need to urinate at night

Nearly 53% of seniors have to urinate during the night hours, and this urge is increasing with each passing year.

Nighttime urination could be a natural sign of aging, or it could signal a health issue like diabetes, bladder problems, or prostate problems. If nighttime urination is keeping you awake every night, speak

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to your doctor to find out the cause.

You snore

Snoring doesn't necessarily mean you are in a deep sleep. In fact, it could be indicative of obstructive sleep apnea, a sleep disorder in which the person stops breathing momentarily numerous times a night. The good news is, your doctor can diagnose sleep apnea through a sleep test and prescribe a CPAP device to help prevent the stoppage of breathing.

You are suffering from restless leg syndrome (RLS)

As you age, your risk of restless leg syndrome increases. In this condition, the legs are restless and feel as if they need to be in motion due to tingling or crawling sensations. Speak to your doctor if you suspect you have the condition as there are treatment options that may help.

You sleep in the wrong position

You may not realize this, but even if you are sleeping through the night, you may not be getting the full benefits of sleep because you are not sleeping in a proper position.

According to research, if you're looking for the best way

to sleep night after night, it is on your left side. Why, you ask? Well, here is the research to back it up.

A study has found that sleeping on your left side is the least harmful position for your spine. When you lay on your back, you put too much pressure on your hips and upper back. If you sleep on your stomach, you put added strain onto your neck and lower back

On the other hand, when you're sleeping on your left side, the pressure is taken off the lymph drainage from the heart and spleen, promoting the proper flow of lymph.

Sleeping on your left side has also been shown to relieve nighttime congestion, so you can breathe easier. And it can improve snoring! This is because

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With these fixes, you can achieve longer, more restful sleep as soon as tonight!

sleeping on your left side gives optimum air flow and prevents the base of your tongue from rolling into the back of the throat, obstructing breathing.

Sleeping on your left side can help relieve heartburn and acid reflux symptoms as well.

More benefits?

Improved regularity and easier waste removal, preventing constipation. (It is

easier for food to travel through the intestines in this position.)

Now that we've looked at the possible causes of your sleeping problems and the negative impact of sleep insufficiency on your overall health, it's time to explore the ways to get your good night's sleep back. With these fixes, you can achieve longer, more restful sleep as soon as tonight!

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1 Create a proper sleep environment

Oftentimes, the room where you sleep makes all the difference.

You should be sleeping in complete darkness. Our body's inner clock runs with the sunlight. For many of us, trouble falling asleep could be due to the fact that there is too much light in our room. When it's dark, our body begins to produce melatonin, the hormone that helps you fall

asleep at night. When there's light, this process is delayed, so we find ourselves tossing and turning.

Try to keep your room as dark as possible. This includes turning off your electronic devices – if needed, leave them in another room. Gadgets like laptops, cell phones, and TVs all emit blue light that can mess with your body's production of melatonin. If you are taking these devices to bed, you could be having a harder time falling or staying asleep.

Another environmental consideration is room temperature. When you are in a room that's too hot or too cold, you may not sleep



well. Studies show that room temperatures below 65°F and above 75°F have a negative effect on sleep cycles. So try to keep it within that range.

Now, how's your mattress? A bad mattress and a pillow that doesn't support your body right spell bad news for sleep. A thicker mattress retains heat to keep you warm. If you're finding you have trouble sleeping because you're hot all the time, you may want to consider opting for a thinner mattress.

Lastly, believe it or not, your sleeping attire matters, too. Avoid wearing thick pajamas and ensure your sleepwear is breathable (preferably cotton) and loose-fitting to ensure you are at your upmost comfort level.

2 Keep a journal

This is particularly helpful if you suffer from insomnia, but it can help with all other sleep troubles, too. Sometimes we cannot sleep because by the time we close our eyes, our brain becomes too active, bringing up all of the day's

worries. Keeping a journal can help you rid your brain of those troubles as you commit them to paper and let them go.

With a journal next to your bed, you can stop that worrisome thought in its tracks before it bothers you to the point you are wide awake in the middle of the night. You may even want to turn journaling into a daily bedtime practice if it helps or if you feel there's a lot going on.

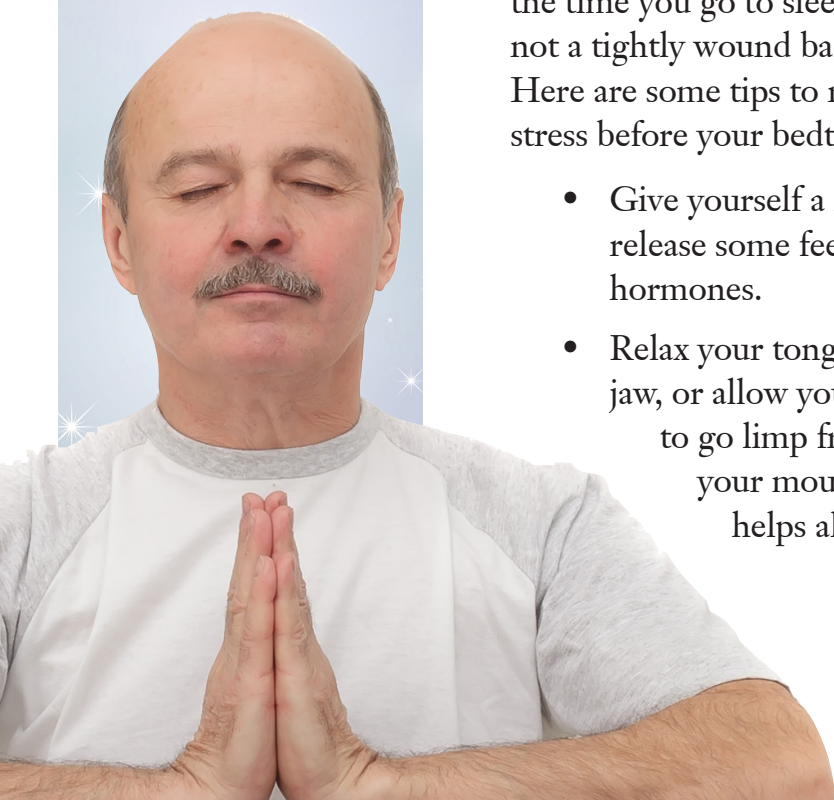
3 Try tension-taming techniques and breathing exercises

Got 10 minutes? Why not use this time to improve your sleep? Research has shown that 10 minutes of a tension-taming practice prior to bed

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can significantly improve your sleep quality. The technique involves different types of deep breathing exercises and imagery. The study found that it reduced stress – a common cause of poor sleep – in 65% of participants.

Here's what it entails. For 10 minutes prior to bed, practice deep breathing while focusing on a specific image or sensation that evokes some pleasant emotions. Not sure what to think of? There are many examples of guided imagery you can find online.

Another great approach is gradually reducing your stress levels throughout the day, so by the time you go to sleep you're not a tightly wound ball of stress. Here are some tips to reduce stress before your bedtime call.

- Give yourself a hug to release some feel-good hormones.
- Relax your tongue and jaw, or allow your tongue to go limp from your mouth. This helps align the

parasympathetic nervous system, which tells your body to reset and restore.

- Focus on your exhaling.
- Think sensually – listen to your favorite music, take a hot shower, for example.

To complement your tension-taming practice, deep breathing is another great way to promote sleep. Incorporating deep breathing into your routine is pretty simple.

Here's what you do.

Take a deep breath in for a count of 4 seconds. Now hold it for a count of 7, then release for a count of 8. This technique, known as the 4-7-8 breathing exercise, is commonly practiced in yoga as a means to promote relaxation.

The breathing exercise is an effective way to promote sleep as it relaxes our body and our mind. Plus, this technique can be practiced anywhere in any position. You can do the 4-7-8 breathing exercise while watching your favorite evening TV show to start promoting relaxation before the bedtime.

Try performing the 4-7-8 exercise at least twice daily for maximum relaxation, but feel free to practice whenever you get stressed or just need a brief time-out.

Bonus points? Once you curb your stress levels, you will start sleeping better and you'll notice an improvement in your overall health, too. Your blood pressure numbers may go down and maybe those daily nagging headaches will subside, too.

4 Watch what you eat

According to a recent study published in the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*, sleeping problems are associated with eating unhealthy, meaning, eating less fiber, more saturated fats, and more sugar.

This randomized, crossover study involved 26 adults – 13 men and 13 women – all of normal weight and aged 35 years on average. The participants spent 5 nights in a sleep lab, staying in bed for 9 hours from 10 p.m. to 7 a.m., sleeping on average for 7 hours and 35 minutes per night.

Using polysomnography sleep study, the scientists monitored the participants' sleeping

behavior. From day 1 to day 3, the participants were on a controlled diet. Sleep data was collected on night 3. On days 4 and 5, the participants ate a diet of their choice, and sleep data was once again collected on night 5.

The study uncovered that greater fiber intake resulted in deeper slow-wave sleep. On the other hand, a diet rich in saturated fat resulted in less slow-wave sleep. And an increase in sugar intake prompted more sleep disruptions.

Eating fixed meals provided by a nutritionist helped participants fall asleep faster, compared to eating self-selected meals. Participants who consumed nutritionist-selected controlled meals fell asleep in 17 minutes, against the 29 minutes required for participants who consumed foods and beverages of their choice.

Research lead Dr. Marie-Pierre St-Onge and her team aimed to prove that diet quality influenced sleep quality, but even they were surprised

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that a single day of greater fat intake and lower fiber intake could influence sleep quality.

The study results imply that diet-based recommendations might be used to improve sleep in those with poor sleep quality. Making lifestyle choices that promote healthy sleep, such as eating a nutritious diet and exercising regularly, will go a long way in promoting good health.

Live a healthier life with improved sleep

If you've been suffering with a sleep problem, the fixes suggested in this report can go a long way in not only improving your sleep, but your overall health, too.

Remember, you should never underestimate the importance of a good night's rest.

As mentioned, identifying the underlying cause of your sleep problems is the first step to begin sleeping well once again. If you suspect that a medical condition is the root to your sleep problem, you will want to see your doctor. For the most part, though, these techniques are the stepping stone to get you a better sleep.

We live in a busy world where we are often rushed and stressed out. Sleep should not be one of those things that we rush through or are stressed about. We hope that these quick fixes help you get back to sleeping better, starting tonight.

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