



Adults can learn strategies to get more restorative and lengthy sleep.

## Sweet dreams

### Learn how to sleep like a child again

**M**any adults lament that even if they were solid sleepers in their younger years, by the age of 50, their quality of sleep has unraveled. Some cling to the wisdom that people simply do not need as much sleep as they

get older. Even though that is partly true, sufficient sleep is still a vital component of a healthy life.

The National Sleep Foundation recently updated its sleep recommendations per age group to include categories “may be appropriate” and “not

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recommended.” This includes a range of hours that may be adequate for certain adults. Adults between the ages of 26 and 65 are advised to get seven to nine hours of sleep per evening. However, six hours or 10 hours also may be acceptable. People over the age of 65

need roughly seven to eight hours of sleep each night, though between five and six hours also may be fine. Generally speaking, anything under five hours is not recommended based on data reviewed by sleep experts.

Many older adults do not get enough

sleep due to insomnia, states Jack Gardner, MD, a neurologist certified in sleep medicine. They’re concerned about health issues, may have sleep apnea, can experience pain or frequent urination, or may be taking medication that impedes sleep. Dr. Leila Kheirandish-Gozal, director of clinical sleep research at the University of Chicago, says that, over time, insufficient sleep can impact metabolism, mood, memory, and heart function.

Various strategies can help people get more sleep and enjoy better sleep quality.

- **Create a luxury bed environment.** Splurge on the largest mattress you can afford and one that is comfortable for both parties (if married/coupled). A roomy bed routinely invites sleep. If you have a restless partner, try two

separate beds pushed against each other.

- **Consider white noise.** The sounds of the house or outdoors may be keeping you up. Many people find that the gentle hum of a fan or a white-noise machine with a calming sound effect makes it easier for them to dose off than complete quiet. It can also block out extraneous noises.

- **Keep electronics out of the bedroom.** It can be challenging to disconnect from electronics, but it is essential to falling asleep. Even a back-lit text coming through in the wee hours can be enough illumination to disrupt sleep.

- **See your doctor.** If medications or illnesses are keeping you up, a change in regimen may provide the relief you need.

Older adults can learn the steps to sleeping more soundly and easily.

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