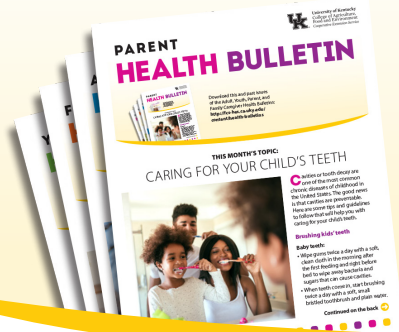


PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



MAY 2025

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THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

HELP YOUR CHILD GET THE SLEEP THEY NEED



Everyone needs sleep to be healthy. Sleep is important for children because it impacts physical, mental, and emotional growth and development. While asleep, children's bodies release hormones that drive physical growth, bone and muscle development, and overall health. Sleep allows the body to heal from illness and injury and protect against future encounters with disease. Adequate sleep strengthens the immune system, helping prevent serious infections and illnesses. Sleep is vital in cataloging memories and learning new information, helping children remember what they have learned throughout the day. Children who get, on average, the recommended amount of sleep each night tend to have longer attention

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A photograph of a classroom scene. A female teacher with blonde hair, wearing a light-colored blazer and striped pants, stands at the front of the room. She is holding a clipboard and gesturing with her other hand. Several young children are seated at their desks, and three of them have their hands raised high in the air, indicating they want to answer a question or participate. The classroom has green chalkboards in the background and wooden desks in the foreground.

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spans, better focus, problem-solving skills, and concentration, all important for learning and doing well in school. Feeling well-rested helps our brain understand emotions and improve mood, leading to better decision-making and overall behavior.

Just as getting enough sleep helps our body function well, lack of sleep can increase the risk of various health problems, including heart and lung problems, diabetes, and obesity, in the long run. Sleep deficiency can lead to fatigue and impaired judgment, increasing the risk of accidents.

It can be difficult to convince children that sleep is more important than staying awake. They might not understand all the important work their bodies do while sleeping. It might help to reframe sleep or explain it differently. Please share with your child the critical work their bodies do on the inside while sleeping, like healing, growing, and remembering. You might want to use an analogy, such as sleep helping our bodies recharge their batteries.

Here is a list of the recommended daily amounts of sleep for each age, including naps, by the National Institute of Health:

- **For newborns younger than 4 months**, sleep patterns vary widely.
- **Babies 4 months to 1 year old** should sleep 12 to 16 hours per day.
- **Children 1 to 2 years old** should sleep 11 to 14 hours daily.

- **Children 3 to 5 years old** should sleep 10 to 13 hours daily.
- **Children 6 to 12 years old** should sleep 9 to 12 hours daily.
- **Teens 13 to 18 years old** should sleep 8 to 10 hours daily.

You will notice that the range of sleep a child needs can vary. This is because every child and family are different. You may notice that your child needs more sleep. If they have difficulty waking up in the mornings, take a long time to wake up and think clearly, or seem to be dragging by the end of the day, try to increase their sleep time for a few weeks. If they are having difficulty falling asleep or wake up early in the morning on their own, they may not need as much sleep. However, most children's sleep needs should fall within these ranges.

If you are concerned about your child's sleep, bring it up with your child's pediatrician or other health-care provider.

REFERENCES:

- <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/sleep/how-much-sleep>
- <https://newsinhealth.nih.gov/2021/04/good-sleep-good-health>

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