



Remote
Health



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Course Materials

Healthy sleep

How it helps you to self-regulate





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Healthy sleep ^{1, 2}

What does it mean?





Why do we sleep?

- ☞ Relaxation and recovery
- ☞ Maintenance of bodily functions
- ☞ Activation of the immune system
- ☞ Degradation of metabolic products and harmful cells
- ☞ Elimination of toxins
- ☞ Regeneration of muscles
- ☞ Healing of wounds
- ☞ Regrowth of skin and hair
- ☞ Processing of the experiences of the day
- ☞ Development of memory
- ☞ Recovery of psyche

We sleep to stay healthy.





Sleep phases

Sleep is not a uniform state, but is divided into several phases.

A distinction is made between four phases that form a cycle repeating several times per night.





Falling asleep phase:
The brain turns off consciousness, which is why we don't notice when we're falling asleep.
Duration:
ca. 10% of the night

Dream phase:
Processing the day in long, intense dreams.
Duration:
ca. 20% of the night



Light sleep phase:
Noise or light influences the transition to other sleep phases.
Duration:
ca. 50% of the night

Deep sleep phase:
This phase is the most important for the regeneration of the body.
Duration:
ca. 20% of the night



How much sleep do we need?

How much sleep you need varies from person to person and depends on your age.



While newborns need an average of 14 to 17 hours of sleep per day. This number decreases to 8 to 10 in adolescents and 7 to 9 in adults.



What is important for a healthy and restful sleep is not necessarily the duration, but the quality of the sleep, i.e. for many people 4 to 6 hours are enough to feel productive and refreshed during the day.





Sleep disorders ^{3, 4}

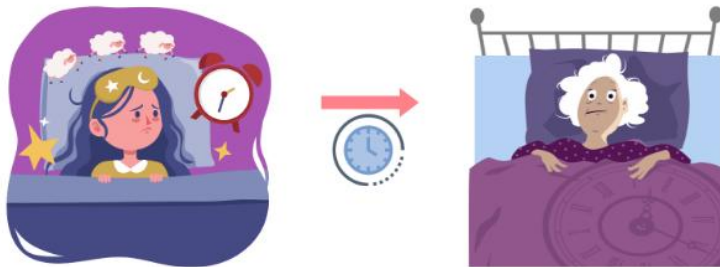




Sleep problems vs. sleep disorders

If you often have problems falling asleep or waking up at night and therefore no energy to cope with the day, then you speak of sleep problems.

If these problems last longer than a month, experts call it a sleep disorder or insomnia.





Causes

Reasons why you have trouble falling asleep can be various, including not only factors such as stress, alcohol, shift work and snoring, but also many diseases such as diabetes mellitus, sleep apnea (breathing stops during sleep) or Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS).





Sleep deprivation ⁵

and its consequences





Unlike sleep disorders, sleep deprivation causes the body to be either willingly or unwillingly deprived of sleep, i.e. the body would like to go to bed but is not allowed to.





Consequences of short-term sleep deprivation

- ☞ Daytime sleepiness
- ☞ Microsleep
- ☞ Irritation
- ☞ Lack of concentration
- ☞ Reduction in memory performance
- ☞ Anxiety
- ☞ Paranoia
- ☞ Poor reaction



These consequences are
also to be expected in
the case of sleep
disorders.



Consequences of long-term sleep deprivation

- Cardiovascular diseases
- Metabolic diseases
- Diabetes mellitus (high blood sugar)
- Weakening of the immune system
- Alzheimer's disease (Forgetfulness)
- Parkinson's disease
(uncontrollable movements)
- Severe overweight (obesity)
- Depression
- Schizophrenia (mental disorder)



These consequences are
also to be expected in
the case of sleep
disorders.



Natural remedies ⁵

Tips to help you sleep better





Find a sleep rhythm:

If you always go to bed at the same time, your body notices this and releases the hormone melatonin at bedtime.



Pleasant sleeping environment:

Important factors are: a comfortable bed, a dark and quiet room, and good ventilation.



Refrain from taking a midday nap:

If the nap lasts longer than 10 to 15 minutes, the body often falls into a deep sleep phase. This makes it difficult to wake up in the afternoon and fall asleep in the evening.

Avoid relevant stimulants:

Caffeine, nicotine and alcohol should be consumed with caution. Caffeine in the form of coffee or green tea can remain in the blood for up to 5 hours.





Physical movement:

Exercise relieves tension and exhausts your muscles. However, you should avoid physical activities 2 to 3 hours before bedtime.



Light Dinner:

Fatty and protein-rich meals, as well as large portions in the evening can affect sleep.



Avoid blue light:

Mobile phones and televisions should be avoided before bedtime, as the blue components in the display prevent the release of the sleep hormone melatonin.



Ignore the clock:

Looking at the clock and realising that most of the night has already passed puts more pressure on you and makes it even harder to fall asleep.



Sleep in the bedroom:

The bedroom should be a rest zone where work is prohibited.

If you have trouble falling asleep, it helps to leave the bedroom and engage in some light activities, such as reading. If you get tired, you can go back to bed.





It is important to listen to your body and to give it enough sleep so that it can start the day relaxed, full of energy and healthy.

Healthy sleep is an important factor for self-regulation!





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