

## Sleep & Weight Loss

Anyone who has had a poor night's sleep can tell you how it impacts their productivity the next day. Feeling sluggish, dull, and not at one's best are all hallmarks of a lack of sleep. Now add on the increased stress levels of a global pandemic and you may find yourself feeling extra groggy in the morning.

But what are the impacts of sleep deprivation outside of how we feel the next day? Not getting enough shuteye is being tied to serious consequences for both general health and weight loss.

People who don't get enough sleep:

- Suffer from increased hunger and appetite
- Have impaired impulse control
- Consume more food, especially high calorie foods, than the well-rested
- Feel decreased satisfaction after eating
- Experience decreased effectiveness of weight loss when dieting

### How much sleep is enough?

Most people need between seven and nine hours of sleep per night.

### Why is sleep so important?

Among other things, adequate sleep fine tunes the balance of insulin and glucose, regulates our appetites, and helps our brains make the right choices about what to eat rather than impulsively gobbling down sweets.

Key appetite-controlling hormones leptin and ghrelin, which signal feelings of fullness and hunger respectively, are affected by lack of sleep. This can make you feel hungry, even if you are eating the right amount of food.

If you have trouble sleeping, here are a few tips to help you get a good night's rest:

- This may feel difficult if you are isolating at home but try to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day, even on the weekends.
- When you exercise, make sure there are at least two to three hours before your bedtime.
- Avoid caffeine and nicotine. Both are stimulants and can make it hard to fall asleep or stay asleep.

- Avoid large meals and beverages near bedtime.
- Don't nap after 3 p.m.
- Allow time for relaxing before bed. Take a hot bath, read, or listen to music.
- Practice good "sleep hygiene": keep your bedroom dark, quiet, and cool.
- For a couple of hours before bed, avoid using devices, such as phones, computers, and tablets, that emit blue light. Blue light has been shown to disrupt sleep by suppressing the sleep-inducing hormone melatonin.

Coupled with healthier eating habits, physical activity and a structured approach, a good night's sleep is a key part of a healthy weight loss journey. Try getting enough Z's this week, and see how it affects your productivity, your appetite, and your general health.