



Tips For Teens

- **Organize your life for sleep:** Make sleep a priority. Decide what you need to change to get enough sleep to stay healthy, happy, and smart!
- **A quick pick-me-up:** Naps can help pick you up and make you work more efficiently, if you plan them right. Naps that are too long or too close to bedtime can interfere with your regular sleep, and a nap is no substitute for a good night's sleep.
- **Create the right space:** Make your room a sleep haven. Keep it cool, quiet and dark. If you need to, get eyeshades, earplugs or blackout curtains. Let in bright light in the morning to signal your body to wake up.
- **You can't fake wake:** No pills, vitamins or drinks can replace good sleep. Consuming caffeine close to bedtime can hurt your sleep, so avoid coffee, tea, soda/pop and chocolate late in the day so you can get to sleep at night. Nicotine and alcohol can also interfere with your sleep.
- **Drowsy driving is as dangerous as drunk driving:** When you are sleep deprived, you can be as impaired as driving with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.08%, which is illegal for drivers in many states. Drowsy driving causes over 100,000 crashes each year. Recognize sleep deprivation and call someone else for a ride.
- **Keep it constant:** Establish a bed- and wake-time and stick to it, coming as close as you can on the weekends. A consistent sleep schedule will help you feel less tired since it allows your body to get in sync with its natural patterns. You will find that it's easier to fall asleep at bedtime with this type of routine.
- **Prepare your body:** Don't eat, drink, or exercise within a few hours of your bedtime. Don't leave your homework for the last minute. Try to avoid the TV, computer and telephone in the hour before you go to bed. Stick to quiet, calm activities, and you'll fall asleep much more easily!
- **Create a bedtime ritual:** If you do the same things every night before you go to sleep, you teach your body the signals that it's time for bed. Try taking a bath or shower (this will leave you extra time in the morning), or reading a book.
- **Leave stress out of it:** Try keeping a diary or to-do lists. If you jot notes down before you go to sleep, you'll be less likely to stay awake worrying or stressing.
- **Talk to your friends about your sleep:** When you hear your friends talking about their all-nighters, tell them how good you feel after getting enough sleep.
- **Understand your body:** Most teens experience changes in their sleep schedules. Their internal body clocks can cause them to fall asleep and wake up later. You can't change this, but you can participate in interactive activities and classes to help counteract your sleepiness. Make sure your activities at night are calming to counteract your already heightened alertness.

For more information about this topic and other sleep issues and tips, visit the National Sleep Foundation's Web site at www.sleepfoundation.org.

