



R.E.A.L. GoalSM: Improve Sleep (Realistic, Easy, Attainable, Life Goals)

The benefits: I will sleep 7 hours or more, 5 day this week.
(Adults should get 7-9 hours of sleep every day)



- Improves your ability to learn, problem solve, pay attention, make decisions and retain and recall information.
- Reduces your risk for depression, risk-taking behavior and suicide.
- Improves mood, motivation and productivity.
- Assists with proper immune system function.
- Reduces your risk for health conditions such as high blood pressure, heart disease, kidney disease, obesity and stroke.

Allow Enough Time to Sleep

- Both the quality AND quantity of sleep are important.
- Try changing your routine so you can go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, allowing yourself seven to nine hours of sleep.
- Keep the same sleep schedule on weeknights and weekends, limiting the difference to no more than about an hour. Staying up late or sleeping in can disrupt your circadian rhythm; which is a 24-hour cycle our body tries to maintain and regulate.

Prepare for Sleeping

- Avoid electronics with a screen an hour before bedtime.
- Put your phone on do not disturb mode. There are settings that only allow selected people to turn your phone on loud if they try to contact you while on do not disturb.
- Take a hot bath or use other relaxation techniques.
- Keep your bedroom quiet, cool and dark.
- Save heavy and rich meals for breakfast and lunch when you need the daytime energy and have lighter fare for dinner. Avoid foods that may cause heartburn or upset your stomach.

- Consume water and other beverages sparingly an hour before going to bed.
- Limit or avoid alcohol, which may help you fall asleep quickly, but leads to disruptive, restless sleep. For sleep, quantity AND quality are important.

Make Healthy Choices Daily

- Spend time outside every day; the natural light may help your body's circadian rhythm.
- Avoid the stimulants nicotine and caffeine well before bedtime. For example, drink coffee only in the first half of your workday.
- Physical activity towards the end of the day may help with the quality of your sleep.
- For some people, a short 15-20-minute nap in the early afternoon can boost alertness.

If You're a Shift Worker

- Take short naps when possible.
- Increase the amount of time available for sleep.
- Keep the lights bright at work.
- Limit shift changes so your body clock can adjust.
- Limit caffeine to the first part of your shift.
- Remove sound and light distractions in your bedroom during daytime sleep (e.g., Use light-blocking curtains).

Assess Your Sleep:

- Talk with your doctor about your sleep concerns or a potential sleep study.
- Keep a sleep journal to track your sleep patterns and see if anything you try is helping.

Online Resources:

- [National Sleep Foundation](#)
- [Improve Your Sleep – Sleep.Org](#)
- [Better Sleep, Better Health - WebMD](#)

To choose another goal, go to: <https://www.deancare.com/wellness/real-goals>

For help to translate or understand this, please call (800) 279-1301. (TTY dial 711)