

SLEEP IS YOUR SUPERPOWER

CONVERSATION STARTER

Often people forget the power sleep can have in improving their mental and physical wellness. Use this poster to explore the benefits of sleep and strategies for getting consistently good sleep.

Discussion question:

How much sleep does the average adult need?

Solicit a few participant responses.

The average adult needs seven or more hours of sleep. To maximize the benefit, it is about more than simply getting a certain number of hours of sleep. The sleep needs to be of good quality and happen on a regular schedule. These practices will help you wake up feeling refreshed more consistently.

Discussion question:

What are the potential benefits of getting enough sleep?

Possible answers include:

- Getting sick less often
- Staying at a healthy weight
- Lowering your risk for serious health problems, like diabetes and heart disease
- Reducing stress and improving your mood
- Thinking more clearly and doing better in school and at work
- Getting along better with people
- Making good driving decisions and avoiding injuries
- Drowsy drivers cause thousands of car accidents every year.

If you have trouble falling asleep, try making changes to your routine, which could include:

- Creating a comfortable sleep environment
- Setting a bedtime routine

Keep in mind that it's normal to have trouble sleeping every now and then. However, if you experience these problems regularly, you may have a **sleeping disorder**. Consult a medical professional for testing and possible treatment.

Discussion question:

What other adjustments to your daily routine can make it easier to fall asleep at night?

Possible answers include:

- Spending time outdoors
- Planning your physical activity for earlier in the day instead of right before you go to bed
- Staying away from caffeine late in the day
- Limiting daytime naps to 20 minutes or less
- Drinking in moderation (less than one standard drink in a day for women and less than two standard drinks in a day for men) if at all
- Avoiding eating a big meal close to bedtime
- Quitting the use of tobacco products (if applicable)

Discussion Question:

How can you create a comfortable sleep environment?

Possible answers include:

- Making sure your bedroom is dark
- If there are streetlights near your window, try putting up light-blocking curtains.
- Keeping your bedroom quiet or using white noise to block out sudden spikes in sound
- Keeping electronic devices, e.g., TVs, computers and smartphones, out of your bedroom

Discussion Question:

What steps help create a good bedtime routine?

Possible answers include:

- Going to bed at the same time every night
- Trying to get the same amount of sleep every night
- Avoiding eating, talking on the phone or reading in bed
- Avoiding using computers or smartphones, watching TV or playing video games at bedtime

If you find yourself worrying about things at night, use these **tips to help manage stress**. If you're still awake after staying in bed for more than 20 minutes, get up. Do something relaxing, like reading or meditating, until you feel sleepy.

Use our discussion today to identify one small, actionable step you can take this week to begin improving your sleep. Remember, sleep is your superpower! It plays a huge role in bettering your mental and physical wellness.

RESOURCES

The content in this discussion guide is based on information from [health.gov](https://www.health.gov).

