Sleep

Sleep is more than just rest. While nobody is sure exactly how sleep restores the body, we do know that getting restful shut-eye is essential for both mental and physical health. Everyone?s sleep needs are different, but according to the National Sleep Foundation, college students typically need about 7-8 hours of sleep to feel rested and alert the next day.

Why is sleep important?

When you sleep, your brain consolidates and protects the memories that you formed during the day. This means that you are more likely to remember material if you get a few hours of sleep than if you pull an all-nighter. Sleep also regulates other important functions of the body, including hunger, hormone production, and your immune system. Good sleep habits can result in:

- Improved mood
- Increased ability to concentrate
- Better retention of new information
- Quicker thinking
- Improved immune system response
- Enhanced motor skills

Quick Tips for Sleep

Have A Routine. By establishing a set bed time and waking time, you help to regulate your body's "circadian clock," the internal mechanism which balances sleep and waking. Also, by creating a routine around bedtime you can help yourself get into a ?sleepy? frame of mind. This means coming up with something to do every night before bed, whether it's a hot bath, reading a

book or listening to music. This routine then becomes a cue for your body that it's time for sleep.

Exercise. Getting exercise during the day will make falling asleep at night easier, although exercising within 2-3 hours of going to sleep will actually make it harder for you to sleep.

What you use your bed for. Everything has it?s place, only use your bed for sleep and sex. This helps strengthen the association between sleep and your bed. Doing homework and other activities in bed weaken this association, and may minimize your ability to sleep.

Timing is everything. Plan ahead so you won?t have to pull all-nighters. Time management and sleep are related, particularly since sleep may be one of the first things to suffer when time is crunched. In the long run, losing sleep only hurts performance. All-nighters are bad for your body and you retain much less information than you would with even 90 minutes of sleep.

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