



## *10 Reasons Why Good Sleep Is Important*

A good night's sleep is incredibly important for health. In fact, it is just as important as eating healthy and exercising. Unfortunately, the Western environment is interfering with natural sleep patterns. People are now sleeping *less* than they did in the past, and sleep *quality* has decreased as well.

### ***1. Poor Sleep Can Make You Fat***

Poor sleep is strongly linked to weight gain. People with short sleep duration tend to weigh significantly more than those who get adequate sleep. In fact, short sleep duration is one of the **strongest** risk factors for obesity. In one massive review study, children and adults with short sleep duration were 89% and 55% more likely to become obese, respectively.

### ***2. Good Sleepers Tend to Eat Fewer Calories***

Studies show that sleep deprived individuals have a bigger appetite and tend to eat more calories. Sleep deprivation disrupts the daily fluctuations in appetite hormones and is believed to cause poor appetite regulation. This includes higher levels of ghrelin, the hormone that stimulates appetite, and reduced levels of leptin, the hormone that suppresses appetite.

### ***3. Good Sleep Can Improve Concentration and Productivity***

Sleep is important for various aspects of brain function. This includes cognition, concentration, productivity and performance. All of these are negatively affected by sleep deprivation. Good sleep can maximize problem solving skills and enhance memory. Poor sleep has been shown to impair brain function.

### ***4. Good Sleep Can Maximize Athletic Performance***

Sleep has been shown to enhance athletic performance. In a study on basketball players, longer sleep was shown to significantly improve speed, accuracy, reaction times, and mental wellbeing. Less sleep duration has also been associated with poor exercise performance and functional limitation in elderly women. Longer sleep has been shown to improve many aspects of athletic and physical performance.

### ***5. Poor Sleepers Have a Greater Risk of Heart Disease and Stroke***

We know that sleep quality and duration can have a major effect on many risk factors. These are the factors believed to drive chronic diseases, including heart disease. A review of 15 studies found that short sleepers are at far greater risk of heart disease or stroke than those who sleep 7 to 8 hours per night.

### ***6. Sleep Affects Glucose Metabolism and Type 2 Diabetes Risk***

Experimental sleep restriction affects blood sugar and reduces insulin sensitivity. In a study of healthy young men, restricting sleep to 4 hours per night for 6 nights in a row caused symptoms of pre-diabetes. This was then resolved after 1 week of increased sleep duration. Poor sleep habits are also strongly linked to adverse effects on blood sugar in the general population. Those sleeping less than 6 hours per night have repeatedly been shown to be at increased risk for type 2 diabetes

### ***7. Poor Sleep Is Linked to Depression***

Mental health issues, such as depression, are strongly linked to poor sleep quality and sleeping disorders. It has been estimated that 90% of patients with depression complain about sleep quality plus; poor sleep is even associated with increased risk of death by suicide.

### ***8. Sleep Improves Your Immune Function***

Even a small loss of sleep has been shown to impair immune function. One large 2-week study monitored the development of the common cold after giving people nasal drops with the virus that causes colds. They found that those who slept less than 7 hours were almost **three times** more likely to develop a cold than those who slept 8 hours or more. If you often get colds, ensuring that you get at least 8 hours of sleep per night could be very helpful. Eating more garlic can help too.

### ***9. Poor Sleep Is Linked to Increased Inflammation***

Sleep can have a major effect on inflammation in the body. In fact, sleep loss is known to activate undesirable markers of inflammation and cell damage. Poor sleep has been **strongly** linked to long-term inflammation of the digestive tract, in disorders known as inflammatory bowel diseases. One study observed that sleep deprived patients with Crohn's disease were twice as likely to relapse as patients who slept well. Researchers are even recommending sleep evaluation to help predict outcomes in sufferers of long-term inflammatory issues.

### ***10. Sleep Affects Emotions and Social Interactions***

Sleep loss reduces our ability to interact socially. Several studies confirmed this using emotional facial recognition tests. One study found that people who had not slept had a reduced ability to recognize expressions of anger and happiness. Researchers believe that poor sleep affects our ability to recognize important social cues and process emotional information

