

# 3 Surprising Signs You're Not Getting Enough Sleep

Feeling like you need a nap an hour after downing a double shot of espresso is a pretty clear clue that you're not getting enough sleep. However, there are some more subtle signs that you may lack those precious eight hours of sleep. Watching out for these signs and then being able to adjust your sleep schedule will lead you down a path of great rest.



Here are three signs:

- 1. You're hungrier than usual.** Skimping on sleep increases levels of a hunger-related hormone and decreases levels of a hormone that helps control how much you consume. What's more, a lack of sleep also causes you to crave higher-calorie foods.
- 2. You feel down.** Just a few nights of insufficient sleep can take a toll on your mood. You may feel irritable or even sad. Over time, sleeplessness can raise your risk for depression.
- 3. You keep getting sick.** Sleeping just five or six hours per night significantly increases your chances of coming down with a cold compared with sleeping seven to nine hours per night, research shows. Too little time in bed chips away at important immune cells that help fend off illnesses.

## Sleep-deprived?

Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every single day as this routine helps adjust your body's clock, so you fall asleep more easily and stay asleep all night long. Also, limit screen time, which includes not watching television, using a smartphone or a tablet at least an hour before bedtime. The blue light that LED screens give off can slow or halt the production of melatonin, the hormone that signals our brain that it's time for bed.

If you find you are still having trouble with getting enough sleep, ask your doctor or health provider if a sleep study to diagnose your sleep problems is right for you.

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