



Kaiser Permanente Napa-Solano Area Youth Sports Concussion Clinic

HEALTHY SLEEP HABITS FOR TEENS

It is important for teens to get a healthy night's rest. In fact, teens need more sleep than adults, ideally 8 ½-9 hours. Early morning starts to the school day, heavy homework loads, extracurricular activities and social events can make getting enough sleep challenging. On top of that, sleep hours lost to tossing and turning and waking mid night can lead to chronic sleep deprivation for teens. Getting poor sleep can affect our mood, performance in the classroom and on the playing field and overall health. Forming healthy sleep habits is one of the best things you can do for your health and wellness.

Healthy sleep habits:

- Set a sleep schedule and night time routine. Sticking to a schedule helps your body's circadian rhythm (our biological clock) get in sync with your bed time.
- Limit naps to 30-45 minutes. Napping too long can make falling and staying asleep at night difficult.
- Limit caffeine after mid-afternoon. This includes coffee, energy drinks, soda and chocolate.
- Do not fall asleep watching TV before bed. A print book can be a great way to unwind instead.
- Limit smart phone use before bed- The bright light and stimulation from screens can keep us up. Put your phone on night mode before bed (dimming and changing the color profile) and keep your phone out of reach when you go to bed. Let your phone get a healthy night's rest too, charging up for the next day!
- Establish a daily exercise routine. Avoid rigorous exercise right before bed, as this can rev us up.
- Make a comfortable sleep environment- temperature, bedding, lighting and sleep clothes are all important.
- Dim the lights in the hour before bed. If light wakes you, try dark "blackout" curtains or a sleep eye mask.
- Bright light in the morning signals to our body that it's time wake up and get going!
- Time management- Set a schedule for your homework and evening activities. Avoid all-nighters and late night cram sessions.

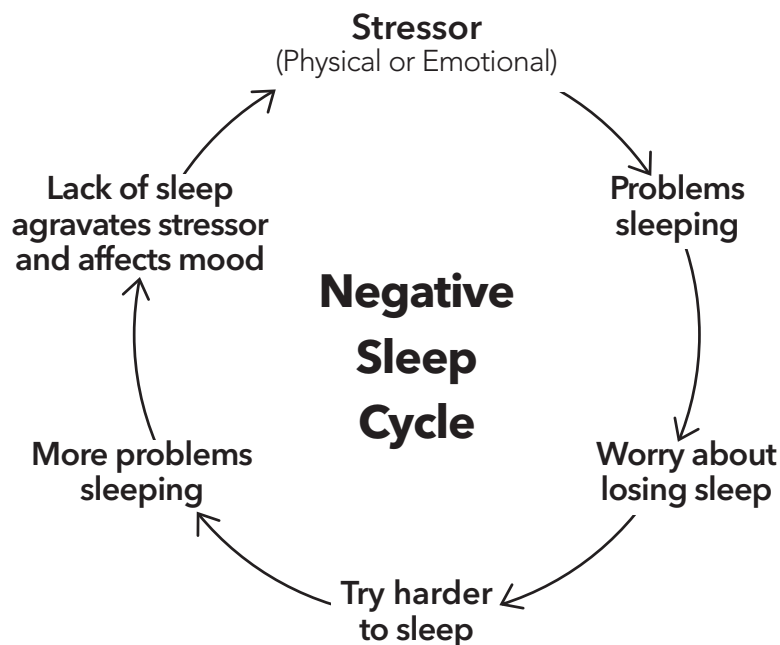
Having trouble falling or staying asleep? Try these tips:

- White noise- relaxing music, white noise or nature sounds recordings, or a fan
- Melatonin (a natural hormone produced by the body)- Talk to your doctor about this option.
- Chamomile tea or a warm beverage like warm milk
- Take a warm bath before bed.
- Think relaxing thoughts before you go to bed.



Sleep problems can lead to the Negative Sleep Cycle:

- Try to not overthink sleep. Try meditation, prayer, relaxation exercises or the time tested counting sheep trick to relax your mind. If you cannot fall asleep, evaluate your sleep environment. Is it too hot, cold, noisy? Try reading a book or do a relaxation exercise (see below).
- Keep a sleep journal to track what helps you get a better night's rest and what triggers a difficult night's sleep.
- Talk to your doctor for additional support in forming healthy sleep habits.



Healthy Sleep when Recovering from a Concussion

Recovery and healing happens while we sleep. During concussion recovery, some people find that their normal sleep pattern is disrupted. If you are having trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep, follow the tips above and stick to a regular sleep schedule. In addition, long naps may disturb night time sleep. Beyond the initial stages of recovery, limit naps to 45 minutes or less if you find that your night time sleep is being disrupted. If getting a good night's rest continues to be a challenge, speak with your Concussion Clinic provider.

MINI-RELAXATION EXERCISES

Neck and Shoulder Release

- Take a deep breath in and bring your attention to your head, neck, and shoulders.
- Hold, then exhale gently.
- Breathe in again, and gently raise your shoulders toward your ears.
- As you breathe out, imagine all the tension in your neck, shoulders, and back leaving through this breath. Allow your shoulders to drop slightly as you exhale.
- Repeat.

Breathing to a Count

- Breathe in and out through your nose for this exercise.
- Inhale to the count of six, taking a slow, deep breath.
- Hold... then, breathe out, slowly, to the count of six.
- Repeat.

Cleansing Breath

- Inhale slowly through your nose to the count of six.
- Exhale through your mouth, and as you exhale, blow as if you are ever so gently blowing out a candle so that it flickers but doesn't go out.
- Repeat twice.
- Now again inhale slowly through your nose to a count of six.
- Then exhale through your mouth, strongly blowing out the imaginary candle, blowing out as much held tension as you can.

Body Scan

- Take an inventory of your body, moving your attention slowly from your head to your feet, noticing any areas of tightness or tension.
- Inhale deeply, and then as you exhale, let the areas of tension or pain soften and release.
- Inhale and repeat.
- Tense, Hold, Release
- Breathe in and tense all the muscles you can at once.
- Hold your breath, then slowly breathe out, letting all the tension go.
- Repeat several times.

Relaxing Sigh

- Sit or stand up straight.
- Breathe in, and hold.
- Exhale, sighing deeply and exaggerating the "sigh of relief" as the air rushes from your body: "Ahhhhh..."
- Repeat.

Mini-Mindfulness Practice

- This exercise can help you feel more peace and relaxation in the moment as you stop struggling against your experience.
- Take two to three deep relaxing breaths. For more relaxation, extend the breath on the exhale by counting one or two counts longer than the inhale.
- Then allow your breath to return to its natural rhythm.
- Rest your attention upon your breath. Then expand your awareness to include the whole of your body, noticing any physical sensations, thoughts, or feelings. See if you can simply notice them without reacting to them — letting them be and then returning to your breath.

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