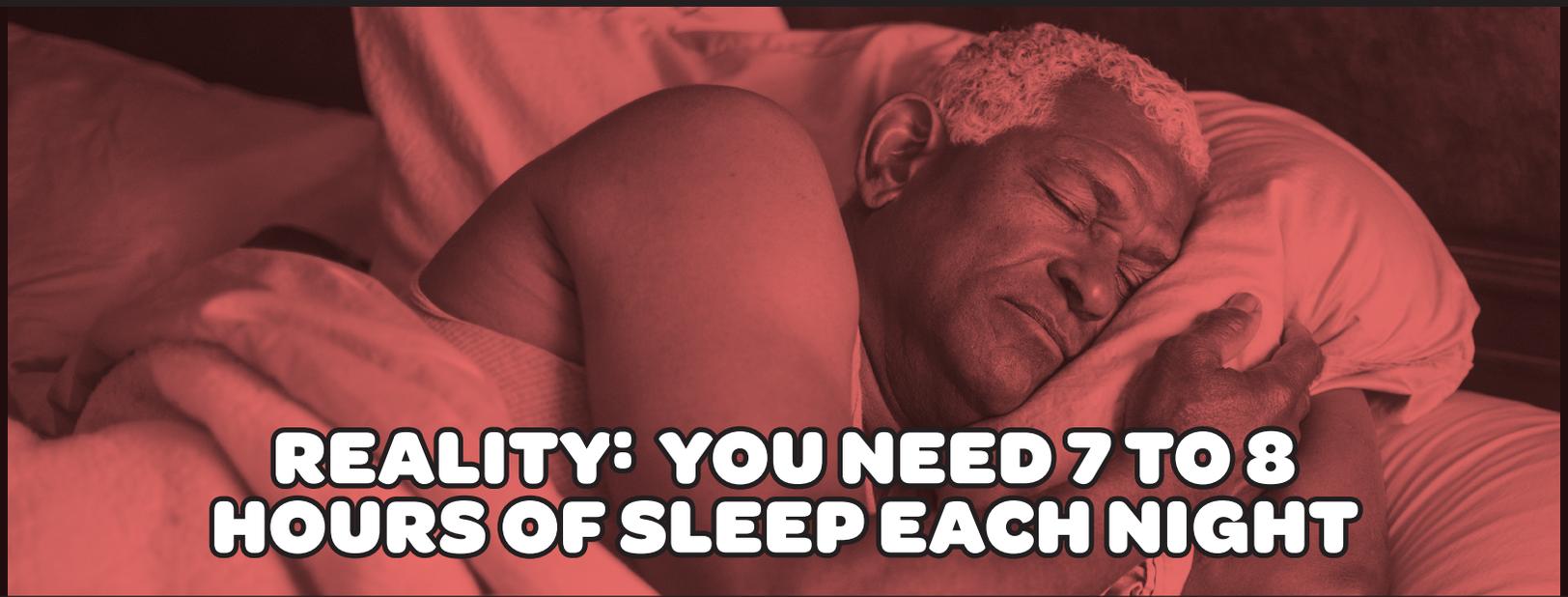


MYTH: I DO FINE WITH 5 OR 6 HOURS OF SLEEP



REALITY: YOU NEED 7 TO 8 HOURS OF SLEEP EACH NIGHT

Getting enough sleep at night can be challenging. However, getting adequate sleep is important for your body to function properly. Research suggests that chronic lack of sleep is associated with long-term health consequences such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and possibly a shorter life. Lack of sleep can also affect your weight and make maintaining a healthy weight difficult. Research suggests that:

- **Not enough sleep can slow the body's metabolism.**
- **Insufficient sleep can make the body store calories as fat.**
- **Poor sleep can make you hungrier.**
- **Sleep is important in making healthy food choices.**

So, how can you make sleep a priority? Try these tips:

- **Routine** – Try setting a “bedtime” routine for yourself and sticking to it. Making it a habit to begin winding down at the same time every night will help your body recognize when it’s

time to rest and recharge. Going to bed at the same time every night may help make your sleep more restful.

- **De-caffeinate** – Resist the urge for a pick-me-up 6 – 8 hours before bed. Instead, try de-caffeinated coffee or tea for the same comforting hot beverage without the jolt.
- **De-stress** – Try to incorporate daily practices that help you de-stress. Read a book, take a hot bath, or do Yoga before bed. Try waking up a little earlier in the morning for some much needed “me” time, or to help the morning be less rushed.
- **Get moving** – Exercising relieves muscle tension and stress. It also takes a lot of energy to exercise which makes your sleep more restful. If exercising too close to bedtime interferes with your sleep, try to do it earlier in the day.
- **Unplug** – Try not to watch TV, use your phone, or complete any kind of work while in bed. Make this the space you come to for rest and relaxation. Practice this daily to fall asleep faster and have more restful sleep.

INCLUSION TIPS: For individuals with disabilities, problems with sleep are one of the most commonly reported secondary conditions. Not sleeping well can impact our sense of well-being

and make conditions like depression/anxiety, pain and fatigue worse. This Aging Well with a Disability Factsheet provides information on [how to sleep better](#).

FAMILY MATTERS: Do you find it difficult to get your kids in bed at a reasonable time? Try setting a consistent bedtime and using a timer to

help your kids get ready for bed faster. Make bedtime a game of “who can beat the clock?” If your family can get to bed faster, so can you!

LINKS:

Get Enough Sleep: mentalhealthamerica.net/get-enough-sleep

Weight Loss and Sleep: Is There a Connection?: psychologytoday.com/us/blog/sleep-newzzz/201709/weight-loss-and-sleep-is-there-connection-1

Tips to Get Your Kids to Sleep: healthline.com/health/tips-get-your-kids-sleep

Healthy Recipes for Sleep Enhancing Foods: eatingwell.com/recipes/22181/lifestyle-diets/sleep-foods/slideshow/healthy-recipes-for-sleep-enhancing-foods/