

Introduction: At each follow-up visit the D2d study will provide you with a handout on the lifestyle changes you can make to reduce your risk for diabetes. Research shows that losing 5% to 7% of your body weight (about 10 to 14 pounds for a 200-pound person) and getting at least 150 minutes each week of physical activity can help you prevent or delay type 2 diabetes. We hope you find the information in these handouts helpful.

Healthy Sleep Basics

Along with nutrition and exercise, sleep is one of the three pillars of a healthy lifestyle.

Getting enough sleep is an important part of preventing disease and staying healthy. Good sleep improves your health and quality of life in many ways:



Healthy sleep is vital for your physical health

Healthy sleep helps you to be more productive and perform at a higher level. It also helps you fight off infection, maintain a healthy weight and avoid chronic diseases. Without healthy sleep you are more likely to develop heart disease and Type 2 diabetes.



Healthy sleep improves your memory and focus

It sharpens your mind so that you can think clearly. Sleep helps you excel at school and work. Without healthy sleep you are more likely to be forgetful and make mistakes.

Healthy sleep is essential for your mental health

It helps you to balance your mood and emotions. Without healthy sleep you are more likely to struggle with feelings of anxiety and depression.

Healthy sleep promotes personal and public safety

It keeps you alert and helps you to react quickly. Without healthy sleep you are more likely to have an accident while driving or working.



How does sleep affect risk for diabetes?

A lack of sleep affects the body's hormone levels, like ghrelin (which increases appetite) and leptin (which tells us we're full). Not sleeping enough is also known to reduce how well insulin works in the body. Not getting enough sleep may also reduce the rate your body burns calories.

The result is that sleepy people tend to feel hungry and eat more calories than those who are well rested.

That means if you're too sleepy, you could be at higher risk for weight gain and type 2 diabetes.

Healthy sleep involves making the right choices to make sure you sleep well. Here are three keys to having healthy sleep:

Quantity

Most adults need at least 7 hours of nightly sleep for optimal health and productivity. Some people need more sleep to feel well-rested. Try to get 7 or more hours of sleep per night. Set a regular bedtime that is early enough for you to get a full night of sleep.

Quality

Sleeping 7 hours each night isn't enough: You also need quality sleep. Avoid common sleep disruptors in the evening. These include alcohol, caffeine and tobacco. Watching TV, working on a computer, or checking messages on your smart phone before bedtime can also affect your sleep. Talk to your doctor to see if any medications you take might disturb your sleep.

Regularity

It also is important to sleep at the right time. Healthy sleep is part of the daily rhythm of life. Your body sleeps best at night when it is dark. It also functions best when you keep a regular routine. Try to wake up at the same time every morning, and go to bed at around the same time each evening.



Quick Sleep Tips

Your behaviors during the day, and especially before bedtime, can have a major impact on your sleep. They can promote healthy sleep or contribute to sleeplessness. Follow these tips to establish healthy sleep habits:

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule. Go to bed and get up at the same time every day, even on weekends or during vacations.
- Aim for at least 7 hours of sleep at night and avoid naps during the day.
- If you don't fall asleep after 20 minutes, get out of bed.
- Use your bed only for sleep and sex.
- Establish a relaxing bedtime routine.
- Keep your bedroom quiet and dark, and at a comfortable, cool temperature.
- Limit exposure to bright light and electronic devices near bedtime.
- Reduce your fluid intake in the evening and don't eat a large meal before bedtime.
- Exercise regularly but not too close to bedtime.
- Avoid sleep disruptors, such as caffeine, alcohol, and tobacco



Stress and Sleep

Stress is a common sleep disruptor. Unfortunately, too little sleep can then make it more difficult for you to deal effectively with the stressors in your life. It can become a vicious cycle.

A few tips for keeping stress from disrupting your sleep

- Try to recognize what you can and cannot control
- Try talking things out with someone, like a friend, family member, or counselor
- Jot down what's on your mind, and then set it aside for tomorrow
- A little exercise can go a long way
- Yoga, meditation and other similar activity can help reduce stress
- Make time for fun activities – it can help you keep things in perspective

People are better able to deal with stressors during the day if they have had enough sleep. Being well-rested can make it easier to build healthy behavior changes.

Other Sleep Problems

If you continue to have fatigue due to disrupted sleep, talk to your doctor. You may have a medical condition such as sleep apnea or restless legs syndrome which may require treatment.

Studies show that untreated sleep problems, especially sleep apnea, can increase the risk of insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes. Sleep apnea is a common disorder in which a person's breathing is interrupted during sleep. People may often move out of deep sleep and into light sleep when their breathing pauses or becomes shallow, resulting in poor sleep quality. Sleep apnea is manageable with the proper treatment.

Restless legs syndrome is a neurological sleep disorder that makes you have an overwhelming urge to move your legs. Restless legs syndrome makes it difficult to get comfortable enough to fall asleep. However it is almost always manageable through medication and a number of lifestyle changes.

Make healthy sleep one of your top priorities.



You must sleep well to be well!

Materials adapted from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the National Sleep Foundation websites