



# REST & RECHARGE

*The Intrinsic Value of Healthy Sleep*

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**Whether your children are studying into the late hours, or your work demands intensive concentration, sleep is the essential ingredient for success.**

Sleep benefits the brain and promotes attention, memory, and analytical thought. It makes thinking sharper, recognises the most important information to consolidate learning, and facilitates expansive thinking that can spur creativity.

Studies suggest that sleep may play an active role in physical recovery and, specifically, in sculpting the adolescent brain. One such study examined MRI scans in 290 children and adolescents between the ages of five and 18 and found that sleep duration was positively correlated with grey matter volume in the hippocampus, which plays a crucial role in short-term, long-term, and spatial memory.

According to the National Sleep Foundation and the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, teenagers need eight to ten hours of sleep per night. Sleep is essential for physical and mental health, maintaining a healthy weight and cognitive ability.

Adequate sleep also improves the ability of the immune system to recognise and fight infection through a phenomenon called immunological memory, and lack of sleep can increase the risk of catching infections.

But by almost all accounts, many teenagers are not getting enough sleep. Data from four surveys in the US conducted between 2007 and 2013 showed that nearly 69% of high school students received seven or fewer hours of sleep per night. It is estimated that almost a quarter of adolescents suffer from insomnia.

## **BODY CLOCK CHANGES**

Two things control our need for sleep:

- The length of time we have been awake, and
- Our internal clock or circadian rhythm.

Our internal body clock, or circadian rhythm, controls almost all functions in the body. The human body runs on a 24-hour cycle, which is influenced by light. When the sun rises, we are programmed to wake up, and when it sets, our body starts to ready itself for sleep.

The circadian rhythm starts to shift between ten and twelve years of age. While you've been used to tucking your child into bed between 8 pm and 9 pm, they are now only ready to sleep between 10 pm and 11 pm. It may look like they have insomnia: they toss and turn, get up for a glass of water or sneak their phone into their bed - but in reality, their body is just not ready to sleep.

#### **WORKING WITH THE CIRCADIAN RHYTHM**

Knowing that your teen can only fall asleep at about 10 o'clock, and that they need to be out of bed early enough to get to school on time, it is vital that you help your teenager manage their sleep routine. SleepFoundation.org offers the following recommendations to help your teenager maintain a healthy circadian rhythm:

- The circadian rhythm is responsive to light - especially sunlight. It is essential to spend time outside, preferably earlier in the day, as it keeps the body clock running on schedule.
- The body thrives on routine. It is advisable to go to bed at the same time every night.
- Daily exercise can make falling asleep at night much easier. Ensure that you get regular exercise.
- We generally should not consume too much caffeine, but if you're having trouble falling asleep, it may be good to avoid it altogether.
- Exposure to the blue light our screens emit before we go to bed can affect our ability to fall and stay asleep. Avoiding electronic devices for two hours before bedtime is essential for a healthy night's rest.



- We are all a little sleep deprived, but if you need a nap in the afternoon, make sure it is early in the afternoon and no longer than 20 to 30 minutes.

#### **NUTRITION IS KEY**


A routine is important, but equally important is diet and good nutrition. As with everything else we do in a day, eating should happen at regular intervals as when you eat also affects your circadian rhythm.

Eating balanced meals with healthy snacks in between can assist in maintaining a healthy sleep schedule.

Certain micronutrients support sleep, making falling asleep and having a good night's rest easier. These include gamma-amino-butyric-acid (GABA), the amino acids taurine, glycine and L-theanine, and magnesium and zinc. Bioteen's Supersleep has been scientifically formulated to provide an effective nutritional supplement for

teens to help promote a better night's sleep. Containing optimal quantities of GABA, taurine, glycine, L-theanine and magnesium, Supersleep has been proven to reduce the time it takes to fall asleep and go into a deep sleep and the frequency of awakenings during sleep hours; and helps to feel well-rested upon waking.

Supporting the circadian rhythm with a regular routine and a healthy diet, combined with nutritional supplementation where needed, will give you and your family the energy and mental ability to succeed.

*For more information, visit Bioteen online at [www.bioteennutrition.com](http://www.bioteennutrition.com). *

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