

# Aging in Place: Staying Healthy at Home

## The Importance of Sleep

According to the National Sleep Foundation (NSF), approximately 74% of American adults experience a sleeping problem more than once a week, 39% get less than seven hours of sleep each weeknight, and 37% are so sleepy during the day that it interferes with their daily activities. In the past century, we have dramatically reduced our average time in sleep. Though our society has changed, our brains and bodies have not. Sleep deprivation is affecting us all and we are paying the price.



Insufficient sleep is associated with a number of chronic diseases and conditions, such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, obesity, and depression. Sufficient sleep is increasingly being recognized as an essential aspect of chronic disease prevention and health promotion. Getting enough sleep will help you age in place.

## Sleep Needs Based on Age

### Infants

- Birth—2 months need 10.5—18 hours
- 2—12 months need 14—15 hours

### Toddlers/Children

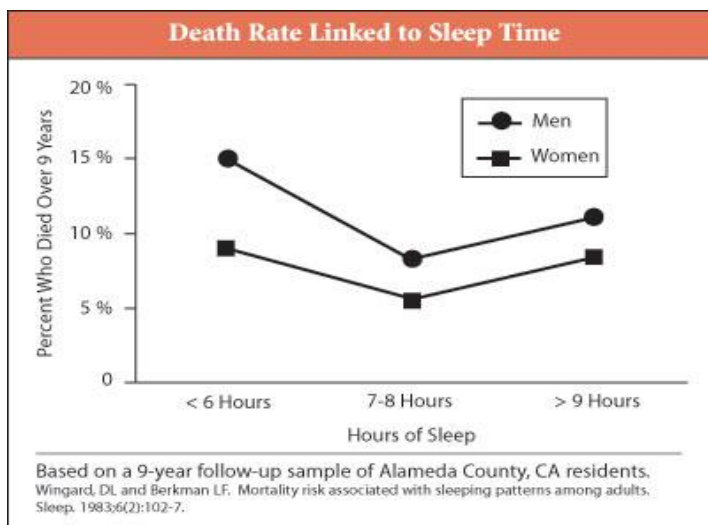
- 12–18 months need 13–15 hours
- 18 months–3 years need 12–14 hours
- 3–5 years old need 11–13 hours
- 5–12 years old need 9–11 hours

### Adolescents

- at least 8.5–9.5 hours

### Adults

- 7–9 hours

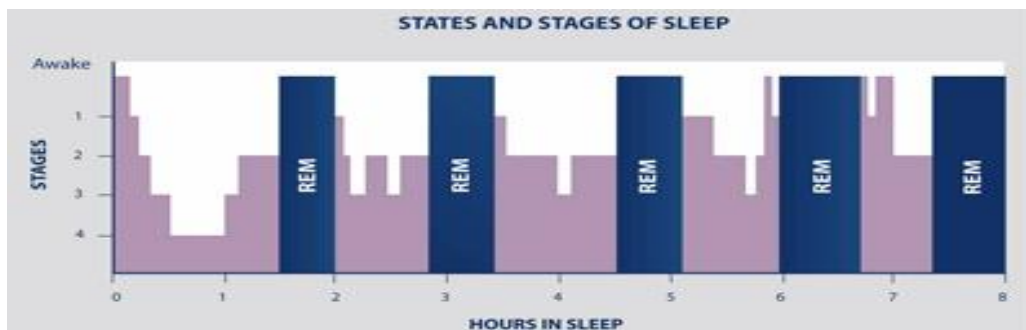


## Six Reasons to get Enough Sleep:

1. **Learning and memory:** Sleep helps the brain commit new information to memory through a process called memory consolidation.
2. **Metabolism and weight:** Chronic sleep deprivation may cause weight gain by affecting the way our bodies process and store carbohydrates, and by altering levels of hormones that affect our appetite.
3. **Safety:** Sleep debt contributes to a greater tendency to fall asleep during the daytime. These lapses may cause falls and mistakes such as medical errors, air traffic mishaps, and road accidents.
4. **Mood:** Sleep loss may result in irritability, impatience, inability to concentrate, and moodiness. Too little sleep can also leave you too tired to do the things you like to do.
5. **Cardiovascular health:** Serious sleep disorders have been linked to hypertension, increased stress hormone levels, and irregular heartbeat.
6. **Disease:** Sleep deprivation alters immune function, including the activity of the body's killer cells. Keeping up with sleep may also help fight cancer.

## States and Stages of Sleep

As we sleep, we pass through different states and stages of sleep – more likely to be experienced with continuous sleep. This "sleep architecture" follows a predictable pattern of REM (rapid-eye movement) and NREM (Non-Rapid Eye Movement) sleep throughout a typical 8-hour period. Each of these states alternates every 90 minutes. Both states are important to experiencing quality sleep. Getting the right mix and enough of both REM and NREM sleep will help you have restful and restorative sleep.



## References

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