



# OP-ENS Newsletter

Our Peers – Empowerment and Navigational Supports

## Sleep & People with Physical Disabilities

Getting enough sleep is important for your health!

This month's newsletter is full of information about ways to promote routine sleep habits. Some people with physical disabilities experience difficulty with sleep, and sleep tends to become more disrupted as we get older. Not sleeping well can impact your wellness and make some other conditions feel worse.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention suggests adults need 7 or more hours of sleep per night. Adults over age 60 may need even more hours.

Check out this quiz to see if sleep might be a challenge for you:

<https://www.sleepandhealth.com/are-you-sleep-deprived-short-quiz/>

Here are some guidelines and suggestions for getting your daily Zzzzzzzzz's.



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**Program for Healthcare Justice for  
People with Disabilities**

# Sleep Hygiene

## Why can't I sleep?

Falling asleep involves many parts of the brain. For this reason, many people struggle with sleep:

- The “internal clock” tells us when to sleep or wake up - this can be altered by injury and aging
- Changes in breathing control like sleep apnea
- Napping during the day
- Reduced physical activity during the day
- Pain
- Depression & anxiety
- Caffeine, alcohol, or medications



## Are my sleep habits actually a problem?

Before you change your schedule, remember that ‘A good night’s sleep’ can look very different for each person, even more so for people with neurological disabilities.

Some people need 10 hours of sleep per night, while others need less but find a 2 hour daytime nap refreshing.

## What are some ways I can improve sleep?



### Daytime

- Wake up at the same time each day
- Follow a regular routine
- Include physical activity in a way that works for you
- Lessen screen time on TVs, phones and other electronic devices
- Spend time in the fresh air
- Limit naps if possible



### Nighttime

- Go to bed at the same time every night
- Create a bedtime routine that you can follow each night
- Avoid caffeine and eating before bed time



## Tips for creating a room for sleeping

- Keep room cool & dark
- Try earplugs
- Try an eye mask
- Dark shades can block light
- If possible, keep electronic devices away from your bed

## Where does rest and sleep fit into my day?

Think about how much time you spend on an average day on each of these activities:

- Hygiene
- Eating
- Sleeping
- Physical activity
- Household work
- Transportation
- Work/ School
- Errands
- Pleasure
- Relaxing or doing things you enjoy

Are you happy with the time you spend on each of these activities?

Where would you like to spend more time?

What are some ways you could make this happen?

## Where can I find more information?

Be sure to speak with your healthcare provider about your sleep habits. Other information is available at

- [www.cdc.gov/](http://www.cdc.gov/)
- [www.sleepeducation.org](http://www.sleepeducation.org)
- <http://agerrtc.washington.edu/info/factsheets/sleep>