

# HEALTH TIP

JULY

SLEEP AWARENESS

2016



Different people need different amounts of sleep. Eight and a quarter hours is the average for adults, while some people can cope very well with much less and some need much more every night. Scientists don't yet understand exactly why we need sleep so badly. They believe it restores us physically and helps us organise things in our brain. We do know, however, that we can't live well without it.

## Top 10 Sleep Disorders:

**Insomnia** - When it is hard to get to sleep or stay asleep.

**Snoring** - A common problem, affecting 40% of men and 20% of women.

**Obstructive Sleep Apnoea** - Losing your ability to breathe freely.

**Sleep Hypoventilation** - Not breathing strongly enough during sleep.

**Restless Legs Syndrome** - Uncomfortable feelings in the legs.

**Bruxism** - Grinding of the teeth during sleep.

**Narcolepsy** - Unstable switching between being awake and asleep.

**Sleep Talking, Sleep Walking** - Occurs when people only partially wake up.

**Nightmares and Night Terrors** - Again occur because of not fully waking up.

**Rapid Eye Movement Behavior Disorder** - People who have this disorder will often act out their dreams, causing a real threat of injury.

Source: <http://www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au/>



## Top Tips to Getting a Good Nights Sleep:

**Stick to a routine** - Try to go to bed at the same time every evening and get up at the same time every morning.

**Take care with food and drinks** - Avoid stimulants like caffeine and alcohol at least an hour before bed and finish eating at least two hours before bed.

**Wind down and relax before bedtime** - Have a buffer zone before bedtime to review the day's activities and work out a plan of action for the next day.

**Lower the lights** - Your body clock is affected by light, so turn off bright overhead lights and lamps and put aside your smart phone, computer or iPad at least an hour before bed.

**Make sure your bedroom is comfortable** - Keep your bedroom quiet and dark with comfortable bedding suitable for the season.

**Don't lie awake watching the clock** - Staring at the clock when you can't sleep increases the stress hormone known as cortisol in your body, making it more difficult to fall asleep. Try turning your clock away from you.

