

# Healthy Sleep for a Healthy Brain

Studies show that sleep improves your immune system and may reduce the build-up of a protein associated with Alzheimer's disease.<sup>1</sup> Plus, sleep can help improve both your memory and mood – which makes it important to have an overall brain health plan.

## You Can Take Action

Try these tips for you and your family to enjoy the brain health benefits of better sleep:

### Set a sleep schedule and bedtime routine.

Better sleep comes through a regular routine. Try to fall asleep and wake up at the same times every day, and do the same activities before bed each night, like reading, listening to music, or turning down the lights. Ideally, adults should get between 7 and 9 hours of sleep each night.<sup>2</sup>

**Avoid activities that disrupt sleep.** A number of activities can make it harder to fall asleep, like naps, drinking caffeine or alcohol, and using screens in your bedroom. Try to avoid these activities later in the evening, and especially right before bedtime.

**Stay patient and persistent.** It's normal for older adults to have trouble falling asleep or staying asleep – but it's important to keep trying. A sleep diary, like [this one from the National Sleep Foundation](#), can help you track sleep and find the habits that work best for you.

**Learn how to manage the effects of Alzheimer's on sleep.** Alzheimer's changes and disrupts sleep.<sup>3</sup> If you or a loved one has Alzheimer's, read [the National Institute on](#)

[Aging's tips for sleep and Alzheimer's](#), which include getting enough exercise, planning activities for earlier in the day and creating a relaxing mood at night.

### Talk to your doctor about sleep problems.

If your sleep problems continue or grow worse, talk to your doctor or other healthcare provider. They can help you find safe and healthy solutions, potentially including sleep aids or medication.

1. <https://healthybrains.org/pillars/>

2. <https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/good-nights-sleep>

3. <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/alzheimers-disease-and-sleep>