

The Science of Sleep

Article: The Science of Sleep and Why We Really Need It

Every night, millions of people close their eyes and drift into sleep. But what exactly happens when we sleep? And why is it so important?

Sleep is not just a time when the body “shuts off.” In fact, the brain stays very active during sleep. It goes through different stages, light sleep, deep sleep, and **REM sleep** (Rapid Eye Movement), which is when we dream. Each stage plays a special role in keeping us healthy.

During deep sleep, the body repairs muscles, boosts the immune system, and stores energy for the next day. During REM sleep, the brain processes emotions and turns short-term memories into long-term ones. That’s why sleep is important not just for your body, but also for learning and emotional health.

Most adults need 7 to 9 hours of sleep per night, but many people don’t get enough. Things like stress, caffeine, mobile phones, or busy schedules can affect sleep quality. Poor sleep can lead to problems like tiredness, poor focus, mood swings, and even health issues like high blood pressure or weight gain.

Scientists say having a **sleep routine** helps. Going to bed at the same time each night, keeping your bedroom cool and dark, and avoiding screens before sleep can all improve rest.

So while sleep might seem like doing nothing, it’s actually one of the most important things we do every day. It’s when your body resets, your brain recharges, and your mind prepares for tomorrow.



Vocabulary Practice

Word / Phrase	Definition
Drift into sleep	To slowly and peacefully fall asleep.
REM sleep	A deep stage of sleep when dreaming happens and the brain is active.
Immune system	The body's defense system that fights illness.
Focus	The ability to concentrate or pay attention.
Mood swings	Quick changes in emotions, such as feeling happy one moment and sad the next.
Sleep routine	A regular habit or schedule around bedtime.
Recharge	To rest and regain energy or strength.
Caffeine	A substance found in coffee, tea, and energy drinks that can keep you awake.
Health issue	A problem or concern related to your physical or mental health.

Comprehension Questions

1. What happens in the brain during REM sleep?
2. Why is deep sleep important for the body?
3. What can happen if someone doesn't get enough sleep?
4. How can a sleep routine help improve rest?
5. What are some things that can negatively affect sleep quality?

Discussion Questions

1. How many hours of sleep do you usually get?
2. Do you find it easy or difficult to fall asleep? Why?
3. What do you think about using phones before bedtime?
4. Have you ever had strange or memorable dreams?
5. What happens to your body or mood when you don't sleep well?
6. Do you take naps during the day? Are they helpful?
7. What do you do to help yourself fall asleep when you're stressed?
8. How important is sleep in your culture or country?
9. Would you rather sleep longer or wake up earlier? Why?