



WHY SLEEP MATTERS

What is Quality Sleep? [Matt Walker's answer: QQRT](#)

Quantity - 7-9 hours (7-8 for most of us).

Quality - Few disruptions, sufficient Deep & REM sleep.

Routine - Same bedtime and wake time most days (± 30 minutes).

Timing - Consistent bedtime/wake time aligned with your [Circadian Rhythm](#).

SLEEP'S SUPER POWERS

Supports nearly every system in the body.

Energy Renewal - Cellular Rest, Repair, Restore, Regenerate (mind & body)

Mind-state - Perception, Impulse control, Mood

Emotional Therapy - Process the day's stressors/difficulties

Memory - Stores memories. strengthens connections, makes space for new learning

Brain Cleansing - Removes metabolic waste, $\downarrow$ dementia risk

Immune System - Recovery from infection, injury & chronic conditions.

Metabolic Health - Blood sugar & blood pressure regulation.

HOW POOR SLEEP CAN HIJACK THE BRAIN

Beyond being tired, poor sleep changes signals to and from the brain.

Hormone Signalling - $\uparrow$ cravings, $\downarrow$ fullness, $\downarrow$ desire to move.

Impulse Control - $\downarrow$ patience, $\downarrow$ self-control.

Social Perception - $\uparrow$ Threat perceptions, $\downarrow$ ability to accurately interpret social cues.

Emotional Regulation - $\downarrow$ empathy, $\downarrow$ calm, $\uparrow$ depression and anxiety.

Rest, Repair & Renewal - $\downarrow$ memory processing, $\downarrow$ brain cleansing, $\downarrow$ energy.



HEALTH RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH POOR SLEEP

Strong association for most acute and chronic conditions

Cognitive & Mental Health - Cognitive decline, dementia, depression, anxiety

Cardiovascular Health - High blood pressure, heart disease, stroke

Metabolic Health - Obesity, insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes

Immune System - immune function, infection risk

Cancer - some specific cancer association (evidence for some, not all studied)

TIMING MATTERS

Stages of sleep provide different benefits through the night.

Deep Sleep (First Hours)

Energy Renewal

Repair, Restore

Immune support

Growth hormone

REM Sleep (Later Hours)

Therapy - Emotional processing

Learning & memory Integration

Creativity

Insight / connecting knowledge

SLEEP KRYPTONITE

Saboteurs that can interfere with restorative, quality sleep. The connection to feeling tired the next day is not always obvious.

Sleep Kryptonite

Caffeine

Alcohol

Eating

Intense exercise*

Bright light

Electronic screens

Suggested Cut-off

8-10 hours before bed

3-4 hours before bed

2-3 hours before bed

90 minutes before bed

Last 1-2 hours before bed

OK if not too engaging