

Optimizing Your Sleep

You can take steps to optimize your sleep starting now!

- Keep your wake time the same, every day, even on off days, once you are on a schedule
- Use the hour before bed for quiet time and allow yourself at least an hour before bedtime to unwind
- Don't lie awake in bed for more than 20 minutes
- Avoid caffeine 6 hours before bedtime & nicotine and alcohol a couple hours before bedtime
- Avoid bright artificial light (TV, computer screen) before bedtime
- Get some exercise but avoid strenuous exercise within 3 hours of bedtime
- Avoid heavy meals within a couple hours of bedtime but a light snack may be sleep promoting
- Keep bedroom environment quiet, cool, and dark

Sleep often is the first thing that busy people squeeze out of their schedules. Making time to sleep will help you protect your health and well-being now and in the future.

Sleep Optimization Resources

- **Headspace**
- **Sleepbot**
- **Breathe2Relax**
- **CBT-I Coach**
- **Mindfulness Coach**



For More Ways to **MOVE, EAT & SLEEP**
Your Way to Optimal Health, Visit:
<http://www.airforcemedicine.af.mil/Resources/Health-Promotion/>

For More Information, Contact



Sleep Optimization for Better Performance

HeRO

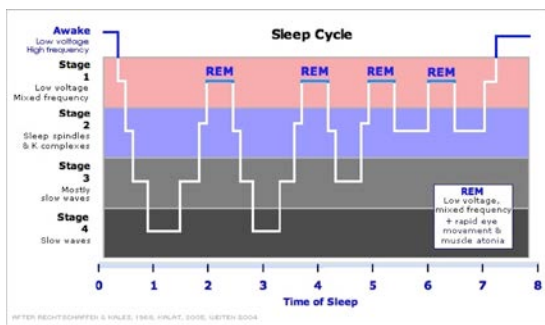
Health & Readiness Optimization

Optimizing Airmen Readiness Where You Work, Live, and Play



Sleep Cycle

You have an internal "body clock" that controls when you're awake and when your body is ready for sleep. This clock typically follows a 24-hour repeating rhythm called the circadian rhythm. The rhythm affects every cell, tissue, and organ in your body and how they work.



If you aren't getting enough sleep, are sleeping at the wrong times, or have poor quality sleep, you'll likely feel very tired during the day. You may not feel refreshed and alert when you wake up.

Sleep Debt and Performance

The demanding nature of military operations often creates situations in which obtaining enough sleep on a regular basis is difficult or impossible. Such chronic, insufficient sleep (anything less than 7–8 hours per 24 hours) produces a sleep debt—a chronic state of sleep need characterized by impaired performance and readiness.

The rate at which the sleep debt (and performance deficits) grows depends upon how much nightly sleep is restricted and how much sleep an individual needs. The only way to eliminate the debt is to get sleep.

Getting enough quality sleep at the right times helps you function well throughout the day. People who are sleep deficient are less productive at work and school. They take longer to finish tasks, have a slower reaction time, and make more mistakes.

Adequate sleep improves productivity and increases energy levels



Sleep and Performance

Our brains cannot function without sleep. You can't train your brain to do more with less sleep and there are no shortcuts, not even taking in more caffeine. The brain only works as well as the amount of sleep it is fed. Remember, "Sleep is ammo for your brain." The more you get, the more mentally sharp your brain and YOU will be.

With adequate sleep, productivity increases, your energy improves, and you think more clearly while being more efficient at work.

People who get insufficient sleep are less motivated, less likely to make healthy food choices, are less active, and less productive.

Your body needs ALL stages of sleep!