

wellness

SLEEP

True or False?

I'm a night person; no changing that.

True, you may be a night person, and in fact, most teens are. But you can establish a regular time to hit the pillow and develop a sleep routine that fits your natural school schedule. A tip for feeling tired when it's time to wind down: avoid caffeine—an ingredient in many sodas, teas, coffee and chocolate. It can keep you wide-eyed long after you should be snoozing.

I catch up on my sleep on the weekend.

You may sleep longer, but there's really no way to make up for lost sleep. It's far better to try to get a full night's sleep every night. For teens, that's 8 hours. Sleeping much more or less could be detrimental.

As long as I get 8 hours sleep, it's fine.

That's not true if the eight hours is interrupted, in say a nap after school and then only a few hours over night. You need to sleep through every sequential cycle to get sleep's full benefits.

If I sleep as much adults say I should, I'll sleep my life away.

Well, you'll only sleep a third of it away, as all functioning humans do. And if you don't spend a third of your life sleeping, you won't enjoy the energy and health for the other two-thirds.

Animals Need Sleep, Too

Sleep isn't something needed in equal portions by all living things. Animals vary in their sleep habits, with differing average number of hours per day for different species.

- Toucan ■ 1.9 hours
- Giraffe ■ 1.9 hour
- Horse ■ 2.9 hours
- Elephant ■ 3.3 hours
- Sheep ■ 3.8 hours
- Cow ■ 3.9 hours

THE REAL SLEEPERS:

- Dog ■ 10.6 hours
- Cat ■ 12 hours
- Tiger ■ 15.8 hours
- Human ■ 8 hours

Asleep and Awake Records

Rip Van Winkle slept for 20 years and two days straight, but, of course, that's a fictitious tale.

On the awake side, Randy Gardner set a world record in 1964 for time without sleep. The 17-year-old high school student from San Diego stayed awake 264 hours—11 days straight.

"Take rest; a field that has rested gives a bountiful crop."

— Publius Ovidius Naso

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