



REMAINING RESILIENT

INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FROM YOUR PATRICK CAPE HELPING AGENCIES



Why Can't I Sleep?

Only 25–35% of Military Service Members report getting the recommended good night's sleep. Devoting the time needed for restful sleep can be tough. Small steps, such as thinking about what you eat or drink before bed, can help achieve a good night's sleep, and make your dream of sleep a reality.

Feeling too full or too hungry: One extreme or the other could be interfering with your sleep by waking you up.

Tip: If you are feeling hungry before bed, have a small light snack, such as cereal or whole-wheat crackers with cheese. Avoid heavy meals, spicy, or fried foods 3 hours before bed.

Alcohol: Initially, you might fall asleep faster, but then alcohol keeps your body from getting into the deep sleep cycles that provide restorative sleep. Even 1–2 servings of alcohol can hurt your sleep.

Tip: Limit alcohol, especially before bed, to maximize deep, restful sleep.

Caffeine: That morning coffee does exactly what you want it to do - It boosts your energy and alertness. But, caffeine and other stimulants can disrupt sleep when taken too close to bedtime.

Tip: Stop drinking caffeine at least 6 hours before bed.

Want to learn more? Check out the articles on sleep at <https://www.hprc-online.org/mental-fitness/sleep-stress>

The Mind Body Connection

Research tells us that our physical and mental resilience are closely interwoven. When our mental resilience is strong, our physical resilience is also stronger. That puts us at a lower risk of heart disease, hypertension, and diabetes, and has a side benefit of improving our immune system. Research also shows that people higher in physical resilience are less likely to experience depression or anxiety.

Strong physical resilience also improves your emotional resilience. When well rested, eating healthy food, and getting physical exercise you will see improvements in focus, performance, energy, memory, and mood. Making the right choices is our best tool for maintaining and increasing our physical and mental resilience. Ultimately, the choices we make every day about what we eat, when we go to bed, and whether or not we exercise, are major factors in our health and wellbeing. Unfortunately, when stressed or under time pressure, we often neglect those choices that matter most.

What if there was something you could do to improve your memory, handle problems better and improve your mood? Something that would help you reduce the risk for heart disease, increase your metabolism and help you lose weight more easily?

Good News! You can get these benefits without having to take medication or practice a strenuous program. What do you need to do? Get more sleep! That may be easier said than done. Most people report sleep issues at least once a week. What can we do?

Routine Matters Researchers recommend going to bed and waking up at the same time each day, even on weekends. That can be a challenge for those on varying work schedules or home dynamics like a new baby in the house. Work toward that goal.

Avoid eating and exercising before bedtime, as both those activities give you a burst of energy instead of the calming effect you want. If you want to work out, try yoga, stretching or even meditation to calm your body.

Keep your room cool. Most people keep their room too warm, which can interfere with sleep.

Blue Screens: We have all heard it; the blue light from electronic devices can keep us awake. The light that comes from our phones and TV has the same effect as sunlight, and it sends our body mixed messages about what you want to do. We often look to our phones or TV to help us fall asleep, but they are likely having the opposite effect. Turn off all your devices at least 30 minutes prior to bedtime. We have all heard about the negative effects of blue light, and it is true!

Sleep and Weight

We have all seen the memes and posts about weight gains that may result from staying home. Just as poor eating habits can keep you from getting a good night's sleep, poor sleeping habits can contribute to weight gain.

The “weight” of poor sleep

You might be familiar with the impact of poor sleep on your daily routine—feeling drowsy on your drive to work, trouble concentrating or focusing on tasks, or limited patience for your family. However, what about your weight? Sleep plays a role in metabolism, appetite, and even your food choices. Ultimately, sleep affects your weight and your chance of becoming overweight or obese. Sleep is vital to restore your body and mind. Your circadian clock is in charge of your 24-hour sleep/wake cycle. When you do not get quality sleep your circadian clock can affect how you metabolize and digest food.

What does sleep have to do with it?

Less than optimal sleep can be strongly linked to weight gain and obesity. Poor sleep can lead you to crave and eat “energy-rich” foods such as fats and simple carbohydrates, eat fewer vegetables, and have irregular eating patterns. The relationship is complex, but possible factors include:

- Increased craving for foods and appetite changes → eating more food, especially high-calorie foods and snacks
- Longer time awake → more time and opportunities to eat, especially carbohydrate- and calorie-rich snacks
- Poor timing of eating → eating later in the evening when your body does not metabolize and digest as efficiently
- Feeling more tired → less likely to exercise
- Changes in hunger and fullness hormones → increased hunger

Bottom line

Sleep can affect what and how much you eat, adding on the pounds. If you need another reason to get a good night's sleep, consider this: Lack of sleep can increase your risk for being overweight, negatively affect your health, and possibly have negative consequences on your military life. Follow the sleep strategies below to optimize your sleep, and reach your fitness goals.

<https://www.hprc-online.org/mental-fitness/sleep-stress/why-you-should-prioritize-sleep-better-military-performance>

Resources You Can Use!

Relaxation Exercises For Adolescents & Adults:

[file:///C:/Users/1110532535C/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/GZ6SQGU1/Relaxation Exercises for Adolescents and Adults.pdf](file:///C:/Users/1110532535C/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/GZ6SQGU1/Relaxation%20Exercises%20for%20Adolescents%20and%20Adults.pdf)

Healthy Habits Children's Activity Book:

<file:///C:/Users/1110532535C/AppData/Local/Microsoft/Windows/INetCache/Content.Outlook/GZ6SQGU1/Healthy-Habits-Childrens-Activity-Book.pdf>

MILITARY
ONE SOURCE

Health and Wellness Coaching for Teens

Physical activity and time with friends are essential to the health and well-being of teenagers. But the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic has isolated teens and sidelined them from team sports and many other activities. If your teen is struggling with healthy eating, physical fitness or stress, a Military OneSource health and wellness coach can help. This **free service** is available to those 13 and up by phone and video. The coach will:

- ✓ Help your teenager identify goals
- ✓ Work with your teen to create an action plan toward meeting those goals
- ✓ Help your teen track progress toward those goals
- ✓ Hold your teen accountable and provide support each step of the way

A parent must attend the first session with the teenager. That session will include the assessment and initial goal-setting. Call Military OneSource at **800-342-9647** to sign your teenager up for health and wellness coaching sessions.



Your Air Force Resilience Site provides reliable information and resources.

Check out these helpful Apps and log on to <https://www.resilience.af.mil/Mobile-Apps-for-Resources/> for more!

The Magic Eight?

Many of us have heard that we need eight hours of sleep, but that is not the right number for everyone. How do you find out the right number of sleep hours for you? Start by tracking your sleep and how well you feel the next day. You may have a Fit Bit or Apple watch that tracks your sleep, but a hand written sleep journal will provide you with a bigger picture, and help you tie your actions and behaviors into your sleep patterns and, most importantly, how you feel the next day. Use this sample as a guide. Keep track for a week or more. Then analyze your results. Do see a pattern? What activities might be keeping you from a good night's sleep?

Sleep Journal

1. Time you went to bed:
2. Time you got out of bed:
3. Total Hour Sleep:
4. Did you wake up during the night? -- No -- Yes If yes, how many times?
5. What did you do when you work up? Approximately, how long were you awake?
6. When I woke up in the morning, I felt -- Refreshed --Somewhat Refreshed --Fatigued
7. Did you consume caffeine in the:
-- Morning -- Afternoon -- Within several hours before going to bed --Not Applicable
8. Did you exercise at least 20 minutes in the:
-- Morning -- Afternoon -- Within several hours before going to bed -- Not Applicable
9. Two to three hours before going to bed, I consumed:
-- Alcohol -- A Heavy Meal -- Neither
10. During the day after this sleep:
 - a) I had difficulty focusing: -- No -- Yes
 - b) I had mood swings or an unpleasant mood: -- No -- Yes
11. About 1 hour before going to sleep, I did the following activities: