4 major clues you aren’t getting enough sleep

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Your head hit the pillow at 10:30 p.m. You don’t remember much between that and your 5:30 a.m. alarm, but does that mean you slept well?

Beyond feeling tired during the day, you may notice a variety of other effects from not getting enough – or quality – sleep. [Dr. Jennette Berry](https://doctors.advocatehealth.com/a-jennette-berry-olympia-fields-family-medicine), family medicine physician at [Advocate South Suburban Hospital](https://www.advocatehealth.com/ssub/) in Hazelcrest, Ill., points to four common indicators:

1. **A decrease in productivity levels.**When you get sub par sleep, your work suffers. According to the [National Sleep Foundation](https://sleep.org/articles/boost-daytime-productivity/) (NSF), sleep deprivation costs U.S. companies more than $63 billion a year in lost productivity. Your personal productivity suffers, too; not getting enough sleep may leave you lazing around after work instead of making the most of your free time or accomplishing your own goals.
2. **A lack of patience.** Sleep deprivation often leads to a decrease in mental ability and a decline in emotional state, causing a sense of impatience and/or mood swings and potentially affecting your decision-making abilities.
3. **An increase in health issues.**Getting the right amount of sleep helps your body operate at its best, ultimately keeping you as healthy as possible. The [NSF](https://sleep.org/articles/getting-enough-sleep-can-help-ward-off-diseases/) says adequate sleep decreases inflammation, lowers your obesity risk, helps control blood sugar and improves your mood.
4. **An increase in headaches.**According to the American Migraine Foundation, headaches and sleep are biologically linked; the areas of the brain that control sleep, mood and headache share messengers, meaning that not getting enough sleep or enough quality sleep increases the chances you’ll have a headache or change in mood.

**So how much is enough?**

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about_sleep/how_much_sleep.html) recommend the following hours of sleep per day:

* 6-12 years of age: 9-12 hours per 24 hours
* 13-18 years of age: 8-10 hours per 24 hours
* 18-60 years of age: 7 or more hours per night
* 61-64 years of age: 7-9 hours
* 65 years and older: 7-8 hours

**And how can I sleep better?**

For a better night’s sleep, Dr. Berry recommends going to sleep at the same time every day, exercising more often, not eating late at night and avoiding television while trying to sleep.