

The Importance of Rest

If you often sleep seven or more hours a night but still wake up tired, it may mean that you are not getting enough rest.

While sufficient sleep is critical, it is only one component in a “rested” state of being. Try these tips for ensuring you have sufficient downtime:

- ▶ **Be present.** Engaging in an activity that requires you to be present can be difficult in our goal-oriented, multitasking society. However, choosing to commit some time each day to meditating, taking a walk, reading a book, or simply observing the world around you has many emotional and physical health benefits.
- ▶ **Manage your energy.** In sports, an athlete who is being held out of a game to “rest” so they will be fresh for a later contest is engaging in energy management. Determining when your best efforts will be needed and then adjusting your schedule so that you will be fresh when it matters is key to making the most of opportunities.
- ▶ **Identify stressors.** What makes you stressed or frustrated? If you have a chronic illness, do you know what circumstances tend to cause your illness to flare? Identifying situations that you find stressful will help you set boundaries and minimize the toll on your physical, mental, and emotional health.



- ▶ **Take a nap.** If you are tired during the day, try laying down and closing your eyes for 10-20 minutes. (Avoid sleeping for long periods during the day, as this could disrupt your nighttime sleep patterns.) If taking a short nap isn't an option, try some deep breathing or step outside to soak up some sunshine and fresh air.
- ▶ **Say “no.”** If you feel overloaded, it's okay to say “no” or to withdraw from a commitment. It may be helpful to establish priorities for your time, money, and energy, especially if you struggle to set limits.
- ▶ **Make time for you.** Some people may feel selfish for focusing on themselves when they have multiple responsibilities. However, making rest and recuperation a priority will help you stay present and live up to your commitments. No one can be “on” all the time.

For ideas on how to incorporate more rest into a busy life, contact LifeMatters. Help is available 24/7/365.

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