

Teenagers and Sleep

What Happens During Sleep?

As we sleep, our brains pass through five stages of sleep. Together, stages 1, 2, 3, 4, and REM (rapid eye movement) sleep make up a **sleep cycle**. One complete sleep cycle lasts about 90 to 100 minutes. So during an average night's sleep, a person will experience about four or five sleep cycles.

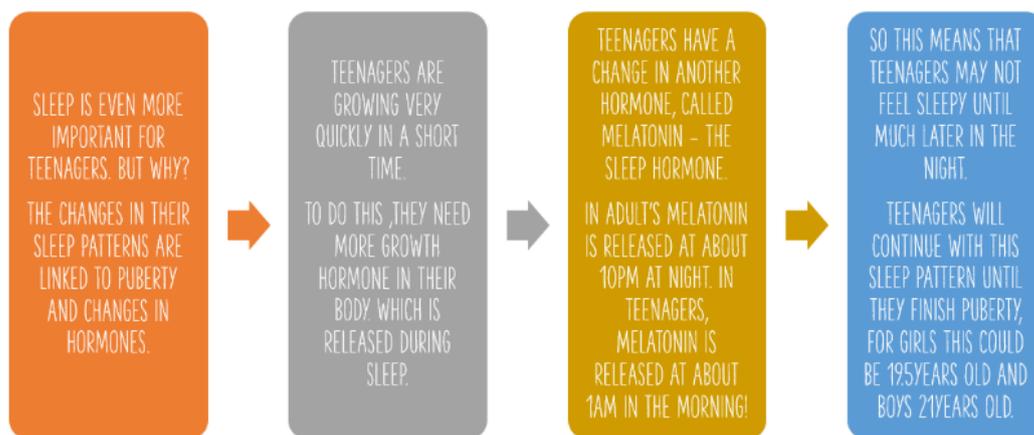
Stages 1 and 2 are periods of light sleep from which a person can wake up easily: During these stages, eye movements slow down and eventually stop, heart and breathing rates slow down, and body temperature decreases.

Stages 3 and 4 are deep sleep stages: It's harder to wake someone up during these stages, and when awakened, a person often will feel groggy and confused for a few minutes. Stages 3 and 4 are the most refreshing of the sleep stages — this is the type of sleep we crave when we're very tired. They're also the sleep stages during which the body releases hormones that contribute to growth and development.

The final stage of the sleep cycle is called REM sleep because of the rapid eye movements that occur: During REM sleep, other physical changes take place — breathing is rapid, the heart beats faster, and the limb muscles don't move. This is the stage of sleep when we have our most vivid dreams.



Why do teenagers need their sleep?



SleepFoundation.org

The teenage brain is still active whilst asleep. So missing out on sleep means missing out on physical and mental developments such as;

- The repairing of cells
- The release of the growth hormones
- Strengthening the immune and nervous system.

Teenagers need at least 9 hours of sleep to be optimally alert.

Sleep and technology

The light emissions from a phone, laptop, tablet or iPad can prevent melatonin (remember, that's the hormone that triggers sleep) from kicking in.

So the more technology we use before bed, the longer it keeps us awake

Not getting enough sleep or having sleep difficulties can:

- Limit their ability to learn, listen, concentrate and solve problems. They may even forget important information like names, numbers and homework.
- Make them more prone to spots. Lack of sleep can contribute to acne and other skin problems
- Lead to aggressive or inappropriate behaviour such as yelling at friends or being impatient with teachers or family members.
- Cause them to overeat or eat unhealthy foods like sweets and fried foods that lead to weight gain.

Top tips



Ensure your child has a comfortable, quiet sleep environment and it is dedicated to sleep only.



Encourage 'winding down' before bed, away from screens including phones at least 30 minutes before bed.



Stick to quiet, calm activities before, and you'll fall asleep much more easily!



Avoid eating large meals 2-3 hours before bed, sugary foods and drinks containing caffeine.



Reinforce a regular sleeping routine. Your child should aim to go to bed and wake up at regular times each day.



Utilise the relaxation apps.



Try a hot bath or shower 30 minutes before bed.

raisingchildren.net.au
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Helpful apps



Everyday Mindfulness and Meditation for Stress, Anxiety, Sleep, Focus, Fitness, and More

Calm

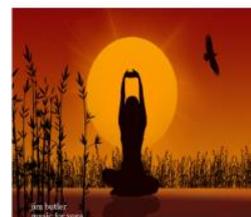
Sleep more. Stress less. Live better.



The soothing app that makes sleep easy. The app can help you fall asleep in minutes with relaxing sounds, sleep meditations and bedtime stories.



Learn to relax, manage your worries and improve your wellbeing with Chill Panda. The app measures your heart rate and suggests tasks to suit your state of mind. Tasks include simple breathing techniques and light exercises to take your mind off your worries.



Jim Butler music – Home of the Deep Energy Podcast Music for Sleep, Meditation and Yoga Over 25 Million Downloads

<https://www.jimbutlermusic.com/>

EDYS - The Eating Disorder Young People's Service at Alder Hey - <https://alderhey.nhs.uk/services/eating-disorder-young-peoples-service>

Kooth --Free, safe and anonymous online support for young people

Neuro Love - **NeuroLove was created to support young people who are between 8 – 25 years old, to stay emotionally and physically well.** <https://www.neurolove.org/>

YoungMinds Crisis Messenger - Provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK if you are experiencing a mental health crisis. If you need urgent help text YM to 85258. All texts are answered by trained volunteers with support from experienced clinical supervisors. Texts are free from EE, O2, Vodafone, 3, Virgin Mobile, BT Mobile, GiffGaff, Tesco Mobile and Telecom Plus.

#Clic is a new online support community where you can access 24/7 free [#mentalhealth](#) support, including an online forum where you can chat and connect with others, as well as access mental health information tools, tips and resources. [@mentalhealthuk](#) <https://clic-uk.org/>

Samaritans – **Call any time, day or night for free on 116 123**

PAPYRUS is the UK Charity for the prevention of young suicide.

For PAPYRUS HOPELINEUK call 0800 068 4141 (open 9am-10pm weekdays, 2pm-10pm weekends and bank holidays).

Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eaelOvmifVQ>

<https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/specialties/sleep-disorder-center/sleep-in-adolescents>

<https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/sleep-problems.html>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IRp5AC9W_F8&feature=emb_logo – How to improve sleep

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KGfdR7TSJo4&feature=emb_logo - Caffeine

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wenzDODyapbY&feature=emb_logo Teenagers and sleep

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oDRrRuPqALs> Sleep Myths