



What does a good sleep cycle look like?

Sleep is something we can't live without. It's where our bodies rest and our minds are free to wander. It's out of our voluntary control and it's vital for our health and wellbeing. Most importantly, we can't function properly without it, and frequent deprivation can lead to long-term health problems. That's why it's important to do all we can to get quality sleep.

FACTS ABOUT SLEEP

- The average person will spend 24 years of their life asleep.
- Adults who sleep between six and eight hours a day tend to live longer.
- Frequently sleeping less than seven hours a night increases the risk of impaired brain function, obesity, heart disease, diabetes, depression and death by 12 per cent.
- Frequently sleeping more than eight hours a night increases the risk of obesity, heart disease, diabetes and death by 30 per cent.

THE 100 PER CENT SLEEP CYCLE

Sleep is largely controlled by how tired we are and our body clock, which runs on a 24-hour cycle and regulates all of our biological and physiological processes.

The normal daily routine consists of morning wakefulness and alertness that continues throughout the day and reaches a peak in the evening. We tire after being awake for about 15 hours and from then on the urge to sleep increases. Darkness is the cue to head for bed.

A good night's sleep consists of at least five stages; a disturbed sleep cycle consists of far fewer.



Stage One (consumes 4–5 per cent of the cycle)

- This is what we call ‘light sleep’
- Muscle activity slows
- There may be occasional muscle twitching

Stage Two (45–55 per cent)

- Breathing patterns and heart rate slow
- There is a slight decrease in body temperature

Stage Three (4–6 per cent)

- Deep sleep begins
- The brain begins to generate slow delta waves

Stage Four (12–15 per cent)

- This is what we mean by ‘very deep sleep’
- There is rhythmic breathing and limited muscle activity
- The brain produces delta waves

Stage Five (20–25 per cent)

- This is known as ‘rapid eye movement’ or REM sleep
- Brainwaves speed up and dreaming occurs
- Muscles relax and the heart rate increases
- Breathing is rapid and shallow

Getting enough quality sleep at the right time can help protect your mental and physical health, quality of life, and safety out and about in the world.

We would like to thank Centre for Corporate Health (cfch.com.au) for their assistance in the compilation of this factsheet.



The Corporate Mental Health Alliance (CMHAA) is a group of Australian businesses dedicated to providing mentally healthy workplaces for their people.

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT:

Website: cmhaa.org.au

LinkedIn: [Corporate Mental Health Alliance Australia](https://www.linkedin.com/company/corporate-mental-health-alliance-australia)



This resource was produced with the support of Commonwealth Bank

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