You’re busy...between school, friends and other relationships, sports, jobs...how can you possibly get enough sleep?

**SO WHY SHOULD WE PRIORITIZE SLEEP?**

**Sleep affects our learning and academic performance**
Sleep before learning is essential to prepare your brain so that it can soak up and retain new information the next day. Sleep after learning is also critical. During sleep, the brain organizes, sorts, and stores what we have learned and experienced that day, making it easier to recall at a later time.

**Sleep affects our mood and our emotions**
It’s true, a lot of important things are vying for your time and energy right now – but the truth is, most of these things actually suffer when we don’t get enough sleep.

If we think of our brains like a car, the amygdala is like the emotional gas pedal and the prefrontal cortex is like the emotional brake. During sleep, the connections between the two regions are refreshed and restored. When we’re sleep deprived, it’s like our emotions are driving the bus and we’re just along for the ride.

**Sleep affects our overall health**
Getting adequate sleep is important for the immune system, diet, and overall energy levels. Lack of sleep can increase insulin sensitivity, increasing our cravings for sugary and other high-calorie foods. Excessive sleepiness is also one of the leading causes of car accidents!

**What about alcohol and sleep?**
Alcohol can make you feel tired because it is a depressant and has sedative qualities, but drinking alcohol can interrupt sleep cycles and interfere with the quality of our sleep. It can also magnify the effects of sleep deprivation.

**DON’T GIVE UP ON YOUR DREAMS... KEEP SLEEPING!**

**The Student Wellness Center | 3rd Floor Robo**
Follow Dartmouth_SWC 📸 📚 🌐

---

**Limit Caffeine and Nicotine.**
Caffeine and nicotine are stimulants, which disrupt sleep. It is best to stay away from these after lunchtime. If you are up late studying or just need a little more energy, try a small energy-boosting snack instead of a caffeinated beverage.

**Avoid screens before bedtime.**
Looking at a screen affects your brain’s electrical activity as well as the release of melatonin, an important sleep hormone. Try to unplug at least an hour before going to sleep.

**Avoid naps during the day.**
Sleeping during the day for long periods will further disrupt your sleep pattern, leading to a vicious cycle. A short nap during the day could be helpful, but keep it to about 30 minutes and try to do it at the same time each day before 3pm.

**Try a sleep schedule.**
Having a set bedtime and rising time will help your body get used to a sleeping schedule. Sleep only an hour longer during the weekend than your latest weekday wake-up time.

**Get moving.**
Exercise can promote more regular sleep and wake patterns as well as reduce stress. It’s important to avoid vigorous exercise 3 to 4 hours before going to bed to avoid awakening the body even more and making it more difficult to fall asleep.

**Clear your mind.**
Worrying in bed about the next day or week can keep you from falling asleep. Journaling before bed is a technique that some students find to be helpful in addressing concerns before bed.

**Avoid all-nighters**
While all-nighters and late-night study sessions may appear to give you more time to cram, they are also likely to drain your brainpower.

**Get outside.**
Time spent outside during the day helps to preserve your body’s sleep and wake cycles.

---

**WE’VE ALL HEARD ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF GETTING 7-8 HOURS OF SLEEP PER NIGHT, BUT HOW?**

- **Limit Caffeine and Nicotine.**
- **Avoid screens before bedtime.**
- **Avoid naps during the day.**
- **Try a sleep schedule.**
- **Get moving.**
- **Clear your mind.**
- **Avoid all-nighters**
- **Get outside.**

---

Sign up for Refresh, a self-guided sleep improvement program available on Canvas. Email Refresh@dartmouth.edu.

The primary care staff at Dick’s House can also help! To make an appointment, call 603-646-4101 or schedule online through Banner.