WAKE UP TO THE NEED FOR SLEEP
Information for the Soldier

Obtaining optimal sleep is critical to mission readiness in the operational environment.

💡 Soldiers may not always be able to get optimal sleep due to mission requirements. These recommendations can help Soldiers get quality sleep as often as possible.

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**SLEEP FACTS AND FIXES**

**FACT**
- 7-9 hours of quality sleep is required every 24-hour period.
- Exposure to blue light from computers, phones, tv, and video games disrupts sleep signals.
- Caffeine and energy drinks do not reduce the need for sleep.
- Exercise promotes continuous sleep, but the time of day matters!

**FIX**
- Set a bedtime that allows 7-8 hours of sleep and keep a routine every day.
- Turn off lights and remove electronics from your bedroom. Use FREE blue light filtering software and apps.
- No caffeine AT LEAST 6 hours before bedtime.
- Avoid rigorous exercise before bedtime. Rigorous exercise circulates endorphins throughout the body which may cause difficulty initiating sleep.

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**WHEN TO CONSIDER PROFESSIONAL HELP**

Seek professional help if you:
- regularly experience difficulty sleeping,
- are often tired during the day (despite sleeping at least seven hours the night before), or
- consistently have a reduced ability to perform daytime activities.

**Professional Support Options**

- See your Primary care provider
- Meet with a Behavioral Health provider
- Medications
- Sleep assistive devices
- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Mind-body techniques
- Sleep hygiene education

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**CONSEQUENCES OF LIMITED SLEEP**

- Less than 7 hours of sleep for 3+ days = 20% decrease in decision-making and memory abilities.
- Fatigue from lack of sleep is a leading cause of near misses, accidents, and motor vehicle crashes.
- Work performance after only getting 5-6 hours of sleep is similar to working after 2-3 alcoholic drinks.

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**RESOURCES**

- A Leaders Guide to Soldier Health and Fitness (ATP 6.22.5)
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Sleep Program https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/index.html
- Performance Triad (P3) Sleep Resources https://p3.amedd.army.mil/downloads
- Army Public Health Center Sleep Resources https://phc.amedd.army.mil/topics/healthyliving/sleep/Pages/default.aspx