

# Sleep and Your Child

## Why is sleep important?

We all know that life is harder to manage if you don't get enough sleep. This is true for children as well.

Studies have also shown that children that do not get enough sleep are often heavier and have future problems with obesity. The experts are studying this further, but they believe that weight problems occur because:

- ✚ Your child may eat more unhealthy foods in the evening if they stay up or in the morning when they are sleepy.
- ✚ Your child's hormones may change because of lack of sleep and make them hungrier
- ✚ Your child may not be as active during the day if they are tired.

## Here are some tips for helping your child sleep well:

- ✚ **Keep your child active during the day.** Children should have at least an hour of active outdoor play every day in order to be healthy and ready to sleep at night.
- ✚ **Establish a regular bedtime and bedtime routine for your child.** Children are more likely to go to bed on time when you have the same routine every night. If your child is old enough to tell time, let them know the bedtime. Even young children will respond to a routine, including a warning that bedtime is soon, followed by a bath, reading a story and brushing the teeth.

Here is a suggestion for a bedtime routine. Try it out!

### Bedtime Routine

1. Take a bath
2. Put on pajamas
3. Brush teeth
4. Read a story
5. Make sure the room is cool and quiet
6. Put child to bed
7. Say goodnight and leave

# Is Your Child Getting Enough Sleep?



<https://www.nationaljewish.org/NJH/media/img/stock/img-stock-Child-Sleep-Infographic.png>

## Here are some more tips:

- ✚ Keep the TV out of the room where your child sleeps. Children that watch TV for more than 2 hours a day are particularly more likely to have weight problems, especially if they do not get enough sleep.
- ✚ Cell phones, IPADS and other electronic devices need to have a bedtime too! Make a rule that they are all charging in a central place in your house once bedtime comes around.
- ✚ Avoid giving your child foods and drinks with caffeine, a chemical that can keep your child awake. Some of the common drinks with caffeine are green tea, coffee, energy drinks and Coca-Cola, Pepsi and Mountain Dew. Ice creams, chocolate and some candy may also keep your child awake at night.
- ✚ Talk to your doctor if you have questions about your child's sleep. Let them know if your child snores loudly or has problems breathing at night.