

SLEEP IS IMPORTANT TO HEALTH...

EVEN FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS

- Make sleep an important part of the daily schedule, and keep to that schedule even on days off.
- To maintain a social life and a healthful sleep schedule, sign up for classes later in the morning if possible. That way if you stay up late, you can sleep in a little.
- Drinking caffeinated beverages less than four to six hours before bedtime can leave you wide awake. Caffeine is a stimulant and can make falling asleep difficult.
- Eating heavy or spicy meals close to bedtime can disturb sleep patterns. Instead, eat something that contains L- tryptophan (an amino acid), such as milk, tuna or turkey.
- Exercising close to bedtime can interfere with sleep. Afternoon or morning exercise sessions are less likely to interfere with sleep.
- A darkened room will help to relax and getting a restful sleep. Use sun-blocking shades if necessary.
- Minimize noise as much as possible. Ear plugs, available at many drug stores, can help block roommate-related noise.
- Maintain a cooler temperature in the room you sleep in.
- Intense concentration right before bedtime will also prevent sleep, so if you need to study during the evening, give yourself an hour or two of down-time before hitting the sack.
- Avoid using tobacco at anytime, but if you do smoke or chew tobacco, try not to do it before bedtime. Nicotine is a stimulant and will make sleeping more difficult. The students had some advice too.
- Plan ahead. A successful college career and a healthy sleep pattern at the same time are possible.
- College students being away from home and on their own, may not realize how important good sleep is to their health and their studies.
- Give your brain enough sleep the night before a test, so when you see a multiple choice question you will be able to make those finer discriminations necessary to choose the best answer.
- College students with larger work loads than high school students may be tempted to stay up all night studying for exams, but, this practice may do more harm than good. Sleep helps encode memories and improves learning.

Adapted from Texas A&M University System Agriculture Program