

# Eat Right

Food, Nutrition and Health Tips from Kids Eat Right



## Sleep and Your Child

Help Your Child Get Enough Sleep for a Healthy Weight

### Why is sleep important?

- Your child needs enough sleep to grow and develop.<sup>1</sup>
- Sleep is important to your child's weight.<sup>2,3,4,5</sup>
- Sleep allows your child's physical, mental and emotional functions to reset. Sleep can help your child do better in school because it helps improve focus.<sup>6,7</sup>



Studies show that shortage of sleep creates changes in hormone secretions that regulate hunger and appetite.<sup>7,8</sup> Over time, this can slow metabolism and contribute to weight gain in children.<sup>3,4,5</sup> Children who get enough sleep are less likely to suffer obesity-related health problems like diabetes, heart disease, and sleep apnea.<sup>4,9</sup> Even one extra hour of sleep per night for kids who don't get enough sleep can lower the risk of becoming overweight.<sup>3</sup>

### How much sleep does my child need?

The National Sleep Foundation suggests that children get the following hours of restful sleep<sup>7</sup>:

Age	Recommended number of hours of sleep per night
< 5 years old	11+ hours
5–10 years old	10+ hours
10+ years old	8.5–9.25 hours

## How can I help my child get enough sleep?

- Talk with your child about getting enough sleep.
- Set and agree on a bedtime with your child and be consistent in sleeping at the agreed time every night.<sup>7</sup>
- Limit or remove all caffeinated drinks from your child's diet. This includes soft drinks, tea, and energy drinks.<sup>7</sup>
- Make the hours before sleep calm and relaxing by developing a bedtime routine. Bedtime routines may include a bath, reading a story, or quiet time before bed.<sup>7</sup>
- Be aware of the amount of hours your child sleeps each night. Make adjustments in bedtime routine if needed to insure adequate sleep.
- Make the bed only for sleeping and not watching TV, doing homework, or playing video games.<sup>7</sup>
- Remove the television, video games, and cell phone from the bedroom.<sup>7</sup>



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