

# The Buzz



## A Good Night's Sleep Goes A Long Way!

CT Quit Line: 1-800-QUIT-NOW

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Many people are sleep deprived, but have accepted this as part of their life. [National Geographic Magazine](#) has reported that the demands of work, social activities, and the availability of 24-hour home entertainment and Internet access have caused people to sleep less now. This lack of sleep is being seen more and more as an important public health issue. [The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration](#) estimates drowsy driving to be responsible for 1,550 fatalities and 40,000 nonfatal injuries annually in the United States. According to one study by the [Institute of Medicine](#) "Persons experiencing sleep insufficiency are also more likely to suffer from chronic diseases such as hypertension, diabetes, depression, and obesity, as well as from cancer, increased mortality, and reduced quality of life and productivity."

### How much sleep do I need?

The National Sleep Foundation recently created an 18-member expert panel to answer this exact question. The panel created recommendations for the number of hours of sleep the average, healthy person would require based on their age. Most adults need between 7 and 9 hours of sleep a night to function their best, and you can find the rest of the recommendations on a [chart here](#).

### Sleep Debt

It is important to point out that these recommendations are not for those running a "sleep debt." Sleep debt is the culminating effect of not getting enough sleep. The good thing is that this debt can be repaid by simply getting more sleep. Many try to use weekends and vacation to draw down the sleep debt they have accrued, but this may not be the best strategy. If you have regularly been under-sleeping for years, it may take a few weeks of extra hours of sleep every day.

### 10 Tips for Better Sleep:

#### 1. Aim for 7.5 to 9 hours of sleep each night

That is the good-sleep sweet spot for optimal energy, health and longevity.

#### 2. Stick to a bedtime, and an alarm

A consistent sleep schedule is key. Staying up late or hitting snooze eight times throws your body off its rhythm.

#### 3. Lower the lights an hour before going to sleep

The bulbs in your house emit blue-spectrum light (like sunlight), confusing your brain into thinking its day. This then suppresses production of melatonin, a crucial hormone for conking out.

#### 4. Avoid texting, emails, videos or checking social media in bed

Your devices also shoot blue light which mimics sunlight too.

#### 5. In the morning find natural light

Try to get at least 15 minutes of sun soon after you wake up. Sunlight signals your body that the day has begun, and stops the production of melatonin, the sleep hormone.

#### 6. Avoid caffeine after 2 P.M.

Caffeine can last 8 or more hours in your system, so even an afternoon cup can disrupt your sleep.

#### 7. Try to avoid sleeping in on the weekends

You may think this is helping reduce your sleep debt but most likely it is confusing your body, and will make it harder to fall asleep later. Again, aim for consistency.

#### 8. Exercise regularly

People who get daily aerobic activity sleep better and more deeply. But stop exercising four hours before bed.

#### 9. Avoid alcohol within three hours of bedtime

It keeps you from reaching the deep stages of sleep, dehydrates you and can awaken you in the middle of the night.

#### 10. A dark, quiet, cool room may be the best for your rest

If needed try wearing a sleep mask and earplugs, and set the thermostat to a comfortable temp between 65- 70° F.

### Sleep Disorders

If you have taken all these steps in an attempt to get more sleep and you still feel sleepy after about 8 hours of rest, you may want to consult your health care provider. There may be a medical condition interfering with you getting a good night's sleep.

According to the [National Sleep Foundation](#), symptoms of sleep disorders commonly include:

- Excessive sleepiness during the day
- Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep
- Snoring or episodes of stopped breathing during sleep
- Urge to move your legs at rest or an uncomfortable feeling in the legs at night

In general, there are several basic types of sleeping disorders:

- [Insomnia](#)
- [Sleep apnea](#)
- [Restless leg syndrome](#)
- [Narcolepsy](#)
- [Circadian Rhythm Sleep Disorders](#)

**DID YOU KNOW?** Sleep and weight have been linked by scientists for a long time now. On average, the less people sleep, the more they weigh, and the more likely they are to put on excess pounds over time.

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## HAPPENINGS AROUND TOWN

- [Spring Outdoors 2017](#) is being hosted by the Last Green Valley National Heritage Corridor. This guide includes guided walks, strolls, hikes, paddles, bike rides & more, taking place from March -June
- [Storrs Winter Farmers Market](#) Saturdays, 3– 5pm, Mansfield Public Library, rain or shine
- [Bolton Public Ice Skating](#) - Bolton Ice Palace, times vary
- [UConn Public Ice Skating](#) - Mark Edward Freitas Ice Forum, times vary
- [Penguin Plunge for Special Olympics](#) - Saturday, March 25th 10am. The 10th annual event will take place at Crystal Lake, Ellington.

Be Well is an employee wellness program provided through the Eastern Highlands Health District with funding from The CT Department of Health. The goal of the program is to make the healthy choice the easy choice.



**Sources include:** Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Anthem, Eastern Highlands Health District, Institutes of Medicine, National Geographic Magazine, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, National Sleep Foundation, Office of Disease Prevention & Health Promotion, United States Department of Agriculture.

### 'Creamy' Pasta Primavera

#### Ingredients

- 4 cups (1 lb.) whole-wheat farfalle pasta
- 3 cups (1/2 head) cauliflower, steamed
- 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 head radicchio or endive, cored and chopped
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 16 oz can cannellini beans, drained & rinsed
- 1 cup green peas
- 1/2 cup flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- Black pepper and lemon wedges, optional



#### Directions

1. Prepare pasta according to package directions; drain and rinse with warm water.
2. Season cauliflower with salt and pepper and puree for 30-45 seconds. Add 2 Tbsp of water, or more as needed.
3. Heat olive oil on medium-low and cook garlic for one minute. Add radicchio and cook for 6 minutes on high heat, stirring frequently. Add apple cider vinegar to deglaze pan. Stir in cannellini beans, green peas, parsley, and pasta.
4. Toss with cauliflower sauce; garnish with black pepper and lemon juice, if desired.



## “Put Your Best Fork Forward”



March is National Nutrition Month<sup>®</sup> a nutrition education campaign created by the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics](#) and the theme for 2017 is “Put Your Best Fork Forward.” For this month the Academy want you to focus on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits one forkful at a time.

This is a good time to think about your eating style and consider making some changes to create healthier eating habits. Start with small changes to your eating habits. These small changes can help your health now, and over time these little changes can add up to improved health outcomes in the future. This is the approach taken by [MyPlate](#), part of the 2015-2020 [Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#), which have been created

to help people in the U.S. eat better & decrease their risk of developing chronic diseases. According to the USDA, about half of all American adults have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet. The Dietary Guidelines emphasizes the importance of creating a healthy eating pattern to maintain health and reduce the risk of disease.

#### **Small changes for healthier eating:**

- Make half your plate vegetables.
- Buy veggies in season, and check out the [Produce of the Week](#) section of the EHHD website for some great recipes.
- Try to eat whole fruit more often than drinking 100% juice.
- Choose whole grains more often than refined grains.

- Go lean with protein. The leanest beef cuts include round steaks and roasts. The leanest pork choices include ham and pork loin, center loin and tenderloin. Go with skinless turkey.
- Substitute low-fat yogurt in place of sour cream or mayonnaise in dips and other recipes.

