

THE POWER OF THE NAP

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF NAPPING



Our increasingly busy lifestyle prevents us from taking the time to nap, with nearly a third of us saying we are not getting enough of it. Recent scientific studies suggest that midday dozing does have countless benefits to both body and mind. Better still, many of history's most successful people have been strong advocates of napping.

Read on, and explore why naps should be a natural part of our daily lives.

WHY NAP?

85% of mammal species sleep for short periods throughout the day. Our typical sleeping pattern - with just one long period of sleep - is an anomaly. This pattern however, does not actually agree with how we are naturally programmed.

Biologically, our bodies are typically programmed for two periods of intense sleep:



So the reason you may feel a wave of drowsiness around midday might not be because of the lunch you just ate, but rather because of the tuning of your natural body clock.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF NAPPING?

- Productivity**
 10-20-minute naps enhance creativity and reaction time, as well as lower mistake frequency. They can also prevent burnout.
- Alertness**
 A NASA study showed a 34% increase in performance and 100% increase in alertness. Also, a 60-minute nap can heighten alertness for up to 10 hours.
- Happiness**
 Napping releases serotonin, a neurotransmitter which produces feelings of wellbeing and reverses the effects of stress.
- Memory**
 It can improve memory retention and clears temporary storage areas, allowing for new information to be absorbed.
- Heart disease**
 A recent study showed that those who napped three times a week for 30 minutes were 37% less susceptible to death by heart-related disease.
- Blood pressure**
 Research has shown that a nap of 45 minutes lowers blood pressure.
- Dementia**
 Napping could help prevent dementia: people lacking sleep have more deposits of Alzheimer's-related B-Amyloid.
- Skin repair**
 Napping increases the speed of skin repair.
- Weight control**
 Lack of sleep is known to produce the ghrelin hormone, which makes us want to eat more. Hence, naps can quash hunger.
- Immunity**
 Lack of sleep also releases the stress and weight-gain hormone cortisol into the body, which weakens our muscular and immune systems. Napping can combat this.