

Sleep More, Get Sick Less

What's the secret to getting fewer colds? A new study says it might be as simple as getting more sleep.

Scientists wanted to know if sleep guards against the common cold. They studied 153 people. For two weeks, scientists wrote down how much the people slept. Then scientists sprayed the cold virus into the people's noses. After five days, 135 people had the virus. However, only 54 of them showed symptoms of a cold. Like what? Stuffy noses and sore throats. The people with symptoms had slept for less than seven hours each night. Or they slept poorly. What about the people who slept soundly for eight hours a night? They were not as likely to get sick.



This hippo looks tired! People who don't get enough sleep may be more likely to have cold symptoms.

What does this mean? Most adults should get at least eight hours of sleep a night. Kids need even more sleep. People should not get more sleep than they need. This can lead to fitful sleep. This means that people wake up often. Fitful sleep makes the body more likely to show symptoms of a cold.

Sleep experts say that people should take steps to get enough restful sleep. Like what? People can go to bed at the same time each night. They should also move computers and televisions out of the bedroom. People who cannot sleep should get out of bed for a while and do something calming.

Dictionary

expert (*noun*) someone who knows a lot about something

sore throat (*noun*) a pain felt inside the neck

symptom (*noun*) something that shows a person is sick

virus (*noun*) a tiny living thing that causes people or animals to get sick