



### Report to the Boards of Health

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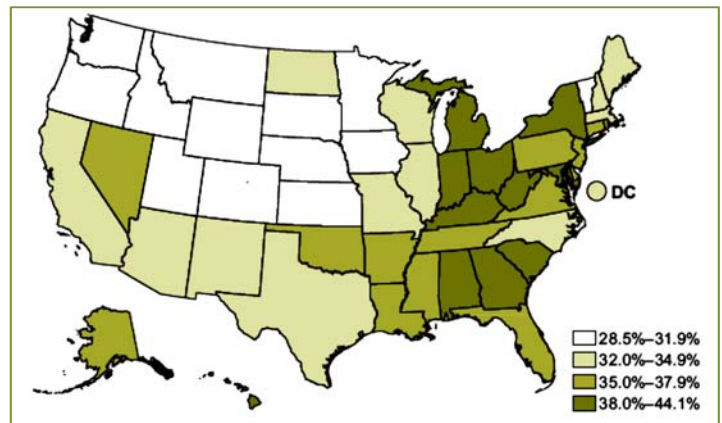
## Sleep

On average, **adults should get at least seven hours of sleep each night.** Some need more, and a very small percentage need less. Unfortunately, **over a third of Americans report sleeping less than 7 hours in a day.** Often other priorities, such as work, family, and leisure activities are given higher priorities than sleep. However, adequate sleep is not an optional luxury: it is literally a lifesaving and life improving activity.

Risks from getting too little sleep have been proven to include increased rates of:

- Obesity
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Stress
- Depression
- Poor mental performance, which increases risks of motor vehicle accidents, workplace accidents, medical errors, loss of productivity at work, poor school performance, etc.
- All causes of death

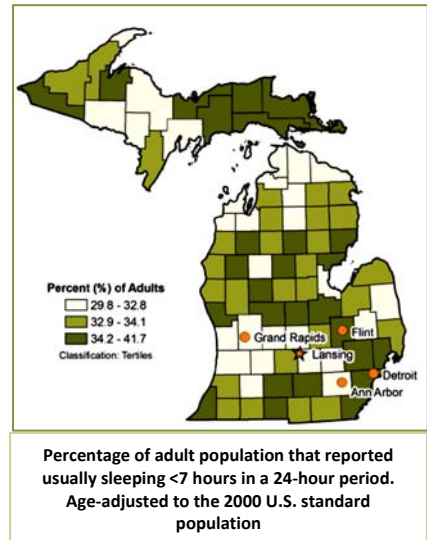
As can be seen in the map at right, a higher percentage of individuals in Midwestern and Southern states, including Michigan (see next page,) get less than seven hours sleep. These areas are very similar to the areas that suffer with the highest rates of obesity and diabetes in adults.



Percentage of adult population that reported usually sleeping <7 hours in a 24-hour period. Age-adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population. Data sources: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2014, Census 2010, American Community Survey 2010-2014.

In order to get good quality sleep, follow these healthy sleep habits (from [www.sleepeducation.org](http://www.sleepeducation.org)):

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule. Get up at the same time every day, even on weekends or during vacations.
- Don't go to bed unless you are sleepy.
- If you don't fall asleep after 20 minutes, get out of bed.
- Establish a relaxing bedtime routine.
- Use your bed only for sleep and sex.
- Make your bedroom quiet and relaxing. Keep the room at a comfortable, cool temperature.
- Limit exposure to bright light in the evenings.
- Turn off electronic devices, such as phones and Ipads, at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
- Don't eat a large meal before bedtime. If you are hungry at night, eat a light, healthy snack.
- Exercise regularly and maintain a healthy diet.
- Avoid consuming caffeine in the late afternoon or evening.
- Avoid consuming alcohol before bedtime.
- Reduce your fluid intake before bedtime.



If you are still not sleeping well or are tired despite getting enough sleep, you may have a sleep disorder and should follow up with your health care provider. Below, the most common sleep disorders are briefly described. Treatment is available for all of these conditions.

### **Insomnia**

Insomnia is characterized by an inability to initiate or maintain sleep. It may take the form of early morning awakening, in which the individual awakens several hours early and is unable to resume sleeping, or difficulty initiating or maintaining sleep.

### **Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS)**

RLS is characterized by an unpleasant “creeping” sensation, often feeling like it is originating in the lower legs, but often associated with aches and pains throughout the legs. This often causes difficulty initiating sleep and is relieved by movement of the leg, such as walking or kicking.

### **Sleep Apnea**

Snoring may be a sign of sleep apnea. Persons with sleep apnea characteristically make periodic gasping or “snorting” noises, during which their sleep is momentarily interrupted. Those with sleep apnea may also experience excessive daytime sleepiness, as their sleep is commonly interrupted. Treatment of sleep apnea is dependent on its cause.

### **Narcolepsy**

Excessive daytime sleepiness, including episodes of irresistible sleepiness, combined with sudden muscle weakness are the hallmark signs of narcolepsy. The sudden muscle weakness seen in narcolepsy may be triggered by strong emotion or surprise. Episodes of narcolepsy have been described as “sleep attacks” and may occur in unusual circumstances, such as walking and other forms of physical activity.

## **Healthy Living Recommendations**

1. Make sleep a priority and take steps to ensure you and your family get the recommended hours of sleep each night.
2. Follow up with your healthcare provider if you are concerned you have a sleep disorder.

## **Resources**

- [www.sleep.org](http://www.sleep.org)
- [www.cdc.gov/sleep](http://www.cdc.gov/sleep)
- [www.sleepeducation.org](http://www.sleepeducation.org)

## **Sources**

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Watson NF, Badr MS, Belenky G, Bliwise DL, Buxton OM, Buysse D, et al. Recommended amount of sleep for a healthy adult: a joint consensus statement of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and Sleep Research Society. *Sleep*. 2015;38(6):843–844.

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