

Towards good sleep

A healthy lifestyle is one of the finest things you can offer yourself and your child. One of the most important factors in a healthy life is the ability to relax and fall asleep. Sufficient rest and recovery are very significant for the overall wellbeing. Sleeping is a magnificent and positive thing around which it is good to create routines that support the sleep of the whole family.

Sleeping is as important to a human being as eating and drinking. During sleep our brains and systems recover from the day's activities. During the night's sleep, things happen in our bodies that help us stay healthy, feel well, and have enough energy for the next day.

The sleep requirement of a child under school age is about 10-13 hours a day. There are individual differences in every child's need for sleep, just as in every adult's. A better indication of sufficient sleep than the number of hours is the fact that we wake up feeling refreshed in the morning. As a parent, remember to give and take time for your own rest and sleep as well.

Daily naps gradually disappear as school age approaches, but many children still need a moment of rest in the middle of the day's activities. Give your child a chance to rest during the day if the child is no longer taking daily naps. A moment of rest can be, for example, a common reading moment, listening to an audiobook or music.

When we talk about children's sleep, it is typical that challenges in falling asleep and difficulties in sleeping become a topic. Stages in the children's growth and development also often affect sleep. A regular daily rhythm, positive and safe interaction between the child and the parent help the child's onset and quality of sleep. If the challenges in sleeping cannot be solved with home remedies, the nurses in the child health clinic offer their help and support.

TIPS FOR A BETTER SLEEP OF THE WHOLE FAMILY

- Regular daily rhythm and sleeping rhythm.
- Sufficient daily exercise and outings.
- Healthy diet and regular meal rhythm.
- Incorporating common, wellbeing-enhancing activities in the day.
- Discussing the day's events.
- Calming down and reducing stimuli towards the evening. It is recommendable to turn off the TV and smart devices before starting the bedtime routines.
- Repeated evening routines that prepare the child to go to bed: evening snack and wash, peeing, bedtime stories and kisses.
- A calm, clean and comfortable sleeping quarters where it is safe to fall asleep.

TO REFLECT AT HOME: Create *an ABC of bedtime routines* for the whole family. Take it into use and make a commitment each to act in accordance with the guidelines drawn up together. After a couple of weeks, make a comparison, did anything change?

TIPS FOR THOSE INTERESTED:

Neuvokas perhe (Resourceful family) <https://neuvokasperhe.fi/lepo/>

Aivoliitto (Finnish Brain

Association) <https://www.aivoliitto.fi/aivoterveys/uni/paremmat-unet-parempi-elamanlaatu>

