

# Beauty Sleep

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Living a lifestyle where there is a perpetual lack of good sleep can wreck havoc with one's physical, mental and emotional bodies. In this blog though, we would like to broach the subject of how that lack of sleep can additionally be detrimental to one's appearance or looks.

First of all, lack of sleep has been shown to lower one's PH levels. One of the many consequences of lowered PH is dry skin as the body is unable to produce the moisture needed to keep the skin hydrated. But there are even more deleterious effects that can happen when one does not get enough sleep.

So, what is enough sleep? Experts recommend 7-9 hours for most adults. This is important as there are three different stages of sleep, each taking place over several hours. In each stage, different hormones are produced. The result of not getting the recommended hours of sleep therefore means you cut short the production of these crucial hormones.

The first stage of sleep takes place in the initial three hours. In this stage the human growth hormone Somatotropin is produced. Somatotropin is essential in the day to day restoration and repair to the skin. Low levels of this hormone result in an increase in fine lines as the skin's ability to repair and rejuvenate itself is weakened. The next few hours is when Melatonin is produced. Melatonin is the skin's protectant, working to block damage to the cell's DNA from free radicals. The last few hours is when REM (rapid eye movement) sleep occurs. During these hours our Cortisol levels (a stress hormone) are reduced allowing for the production of Collagen. Collagen is the building block for healthy skin, hair and nails. Adversely, high Cortisol levels trigger inflammation and can additionally make one more sensitive to allergic reactions. It can also shock hair follicles into a resting phase so no new hair strands are produced to replace those which are lost daily.

One other process that is relevant to mention that happens during sleep is that of detoxification. This is when the elimination and replacement of dead cells occurs.

Our skin really reflects what is happening to our bodies internally. A last good example of this is puffy eyes and dark circles. These are a repercussion of blood vessels dilating to compensate for the decreased circulation that results when the body does not get the necessary sleep.

The following are some thoughts and tips to help you to get your beauty sleep, look your best and prevent premature aging.

- Turn off your screens an hour before you sleep.
- Keep your bedroom as dark as possible.
- Studies show that exercise between the hours of 5-7 pm releases endorphins and stress, setting one up for a better sleep.
- Make sure that your mattress is comfortable and that you have the proper bedding to be restful.
- Keep the temperature of your bedroom cooler. Turn down the heat when you turn off the lights.
- Studies show that drinking alcohol within 90 minutes of bedtime interrupts one's ability to have REM sleep. Plan your glass of wine or cocktail with this in mind.
- Traditional Chinese Medicine purports that every hour of sleep before midnight is worth two after.

"Let her sleep, for when she wakes she will shake the world." - Napoleon Bonaparte

"I love sleep because it is like a time machine to breakfast." - Unknown

"Laugh and the world laughs with you, snore and you sleep alone." - Anthony Burgers

"Dreaming permits each and every one of us to be quietly and safely insane every night of our lives." - Unknown

"I always say 'Morning' instead of 'Good Morning' because if it were a good morning, I'd still be asleep." - Anonymous