



HEALTH SOLUTIONS

# HOW SLEEP HELPS KEEP US HEALTHY



From mood to metabolism, sleep is essential to keeping us healthy. And in these challenging times, it's good to know why sleep is so important.

## SLEEP & IMMUNITY

The immune system is on everyone's mind, and for good reason. Exercise and healthy diet boost our body's defense system, and sleep has been shown to impact T cell functioning - a critical factor in immunity. In fact, findings in one study indicate that sleep may improve T cell functioning. Higher levels of stress hormones like cortisol may inhibit the basic function of T cells, and stress hormones dip while the body is asleep.<sup>1</sup>

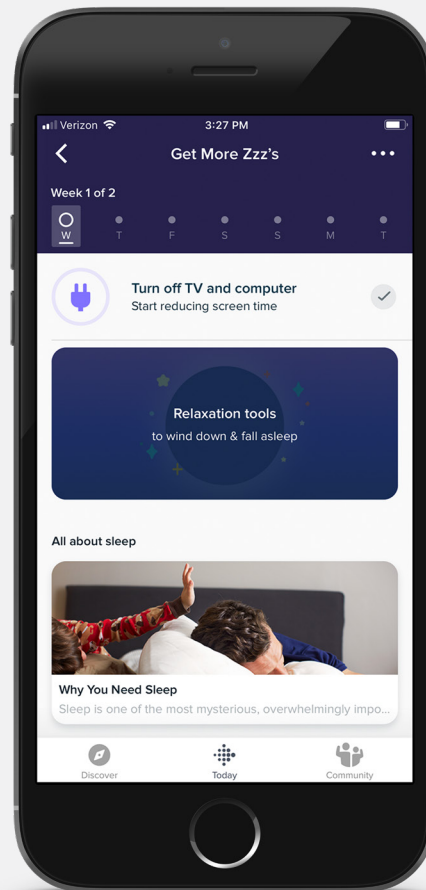
## SLEEP & BRAIN FUNCTION

When it comes to the brain, Michael Smith, PhD, Director of the Behavioral Sleep Medicine Program at Johns Hopkins University and a sleep insights consultant for Fitbit says, "Sleep optimizes how your brain works. There are studies that show sleep helps to regulate emotions and mood. Sleep is also essential for attention, concentration and executive function, which helps us make good judgments, remain flexible and creative."<sup>2</sup>

## THE POWER OF SLEEP & EXERCISE

Exercise and sleep both combat stress and can bolster health and mood. Scientists have studied the connection between physical activity and sleep:

- In a National Sleep Foundation study, 3/4 of regular exercisers reported fairly or very good sleep over 2 weeks, compared to around half of non-exercisers.<sup>3</sup>
- The same study showed that those who sat less than 8 hours a day were associated with better sleep, and were significantly more likely to report “very good” sleep quality.<sup>4</sup>
- Another study showed that sleep had a significant effect on exercise. Subjects that had shorter total sleep time had shorter overall exercise periods the following day. This correlation was strongest among participants whose sleep patterns were poor at the beginning of the study period.<sup>5</sup>
- By the end of another study, which lasted 16 weeks, the exercising group reported sleep quality and quantity rise to a significant level, reporting as much as a 1.25 hour increase in quality sleep.<sup>6</sup>



## FITBIT USERS ARE SLEEPING MORE

In this time of uncertainty and stress, good sleep is as important as ever. And many Fitbit users are getting more sleep right now, according to our aggregated user data.<sup>7</sup> **Fitbit Premium™** - Fitbit's health and wellness membership that turns data into insights - includes advanced sleep tools to help people understand how well they're sleeping at night, and helps draw correlations between physical activity and sleep.

We could all use more sleep during the uncertain and stressful times brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Establishing a relaxing routine before bedtime, like a warm bath or reading a book, reminds your body and mind to start winding down for sleep, and helps you destress.



<sup>1</sup> Journal of Experimental Medicine, 2019

<sup>2</sup> <https://blog.fitbit.com/why-do-you-even-need-sleep>

<sup>3</sup> National Sleep Foundation Poll, 2013

<sup>4</sup> National Sleep Foundation Poll, 2013

<sup>5</sup> Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine, August 2013

<sup>6</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, May 2017

<sup>7</sup> <https://blog.fitbit.com/covid-19-sleep-patterns>