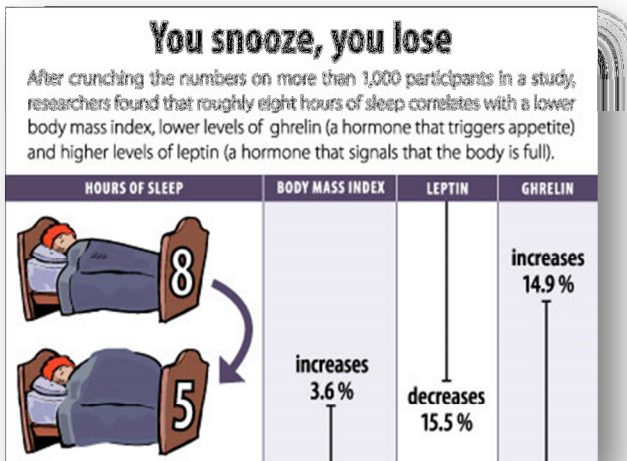


Fit & Lean in 2014

5.5: The Importance of Sleep

Just as exercise & nutrition are essential for good health, so is sleep! The quality of your sleep directly affects the quality of your waking life, including your mental sharpness, productivity, emotional balance, creativity and even your weight! No other activity delivers so many benefits with so little effort!



Exactly how sleep affects our ability to lose weight has a lot to do with two specific hormones: *ghrelin* and *leptin*.

Ghrelin is the ‘go’ hormone that tells you when to eat and when you are sleep deprived, you have increased levels of ghrelin in your system.

Leptin is the hormone that tells you when to stop eating and these hormone levels drop when sleep deprived.

More ghrelin and less leptin = weight gain!

Tips on Improving Your Sleep

Experts say that you should aim for 7.5 hours of **quality** sleep each night. Try the following steps to improve your sleep quality:

- Avoid caffeine after 2pm.
- Regular exercise will improve sleep quality, however, be wary of exercising too close to bedtime as the increased adrenaline may keep you up.
- Remove any sources of light from your room, including digital alarm clocks. At the very least, turn your clock around to avoid being distracted by the light and tempted to check the time throughout the night.
- Keep your bedroom free of electronics – experts continually advise that having a television in your bedroom can have a serious impact on the quality of your sleep.
- Use room-darkening drapes or a sleep mask to keep the room as dark as possible and consider running a fan, air purifier or white noise machine in order to mask any noises which might keep you from falling into (and staying in) a deep sleep.