

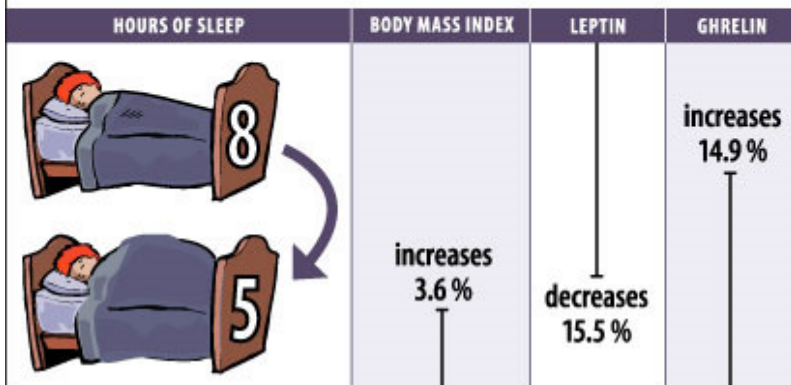
12 Weeks to Weight Loss Success

This Week's Tip:

Catch Those Zzzs!

You snooze, you lose

After crunching the numbers on more than 1,000 participants in a study, researchers found that roughly eight hours of sleep correlates with a lower body mass index, lower levels of ghrelin (a hormone that triggers appetite) and higher levels of leptin (a hormone that signals that the body is full).



Studies have shown that there is a correlation between sleep deprivation and weight gain. Exactly how lack of 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 (increasing 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 + less leptin = weight gain!

Experts say that you should aim for 7.5 hours of **quality** sleep each night. Of course, in a perfect world this would be simple but in reality, it can be very difficult to hit that goal. New parents may only get 4 hours of sleep a night while others may satisfy the time requirement but due to pain issues or underlying sleep disorders, are not getting the quality of sleep recommended. Try the following tips to improve your sleep hygiene:

- Avoid caffeine after 2pm
- Exercising regularly has been shown to help improve sleep quality. Be careful not to exercise right before you go to bed as the increased adrenaline may keep you up.
- Watch what you eat before bedtime! Aim for a light meal or snack – whole grain cereal and milk is a great pre-sleep meal to keep your metabolism working through the night while anything too high in fat can cause digestion issues that can keep you awake.

If following these tips doesn't work or if you are getting enough sleep time-wise but still wake up feeling tired the next day, it may be a good idea to speak to your family doctor. He/she may be able to refer you to a sleep specialist who can evaluate you through tests and a sleep study to determine if there are any underlying disorders which may be keeping you from getting a good night's sleep.

Source: www.webmd.com