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# Say Goodbye to Insomnia: DISCOVER THE BRAIN TAPPING TECHNIQUE

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 14.5% of Americans have trouble falling asleep every night — that's more than 48 million people!

If you're part of this sleepless group, we're pretty sure counting sheep isn't cutting it. That's why we're sharing a sleep strategy that works naturally with your brain and can help you to fall asleep in less time than it would take to eat a bowl of cereal.

The strategy is called "brain tapping," and it involves using your hands to create "repeated rhythmic patterns," which our brains naturally *love*.

The auditory rhythm will trigger the brain to "switch over" to the parasympathetic nervous system. If this sounds familiar, you've likely heard of it before. Evolutionarily, our bodies have two states: fight or flight and rest and digest. The sympathetic nervous system controls our body during a fight or flight situation, and the parasympathetic nervous system controls rest and digestion. So, to fall asleep more quickly, we want to "trick" our bodies into activating our parasympathetic nervous system, or the rest and digest state.

So, how do you do it?

To start the brain-tapping process, sit on your bed or a chair. Then, tap your

thighs lightly using your hands with palms facing down four times, with about one second between each tap and alternating between each hand. You don't have to hit your legs hard, just loud enough to hear the sound. Do this for 30 seconds.

Then, after following the four-tap rhythm for 30 seconds, you'll slow the taps even further to just two taps with about two seconds between each tap. Do this for about a minute or a minute and a half.

Finally, you will slow the tapping to almost three seconds between each tap. You'll do this for about four minutes, and during this phase, you also close your eyes and take slow deep breaths.

After those final four minutes, you'll be surprised how tired you feel and how quickly you can fall asleep. Sweet dreams!



# The Truth About the Teenage Sleep Crisis

## IT'S TIME TO CHANGE OUR SCHOOL SYSTEM!

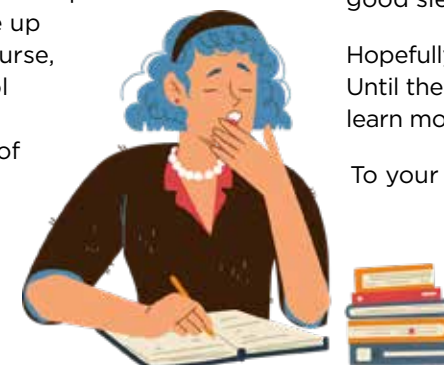
When I was in dental school, one of my first classes of the day was on the 11th floor of the New York University building — and I had to sprint to get there! NYU doesn't have nearly enough elevators, so when I overslept (which happened all the time), I had to run up *11 flights* of stairs. It was torture!

Looking back, I probably should have managed my sleep better, but dental school was so interesting. My professor would assign 100 pages of reading, and I'd become so fascinated by the topic that I'd finish 400 or 500 instead. When I looked up, it was 5 a.m., and starting to get light outside.

My sleep habits were terrible in dental school, so when my kids hit their teenage years, I tried to teach them better ones. It was tough! Like me, they struggled to balance huge homework loads, after-school activities, and sleep. I felt awful dragging them out of bed every morning for class, but the more I read about teenagers and sleep, the more I became convinced that my sleepy kids weren't the problem: The school system was!

I'll say it again: Our school system is broken. It's not designed with the health of our kids in mind, especially teenagers. Here are a few mind-blowing facts I've learned about teenagers and sleep that I wish school administrators knew.

- Teenagers have a different circadian rhythm than adults, meaning they naturally go to sleep later and wake up later! Scientists theorize that we evolved this way so teenagers in prehistoric times could keep watch while adults slept.
- If we let teenagers sleep according to their natural rhythms, they'd go to bed between 11 p.m. and 2 a.m. every night and wake up between 8 a.m. and noon. Of course, that's impossible with the school schedules we have now.
- Adults need about seven hours of sleep. Teenagers need nine!
- The teenage "sleep phase delay" starts around age 10-12 and lasts until adulthood — sometimes even until age 25.



### Big News: Dr. Weddle spoke at the American Dental Association's Pediatric Airway Symposium!

As one of the leaders in her field, she traveled to Chicago this summer to deliver two talks, "Managing Pediatric Airway in the Dental Primary Care Setting" and "TMJ in Little Ones."

Speaking at the ADA is a huge honor, and Dr. Weddle was thrilled to be there teaching alongside her mentors!

Scan this QR code to see her in action!



Learning these things and studying the side effects of missed sleep opened my eyes. By forcing our teenagers to stay up late doing homework and get up early for class, we're putting them at risk of mood disorders, car accidents, diabetes, heart disease, and more. Delaying school start times by just one hour would lower the risk of teen car accidents by more than 50%! Studies also show that well-rested kids learn better, get better test scores, and have healthier growth and brain development.

So, what can parents like us do? We can't change school schedules, but we can encourage our teenagers to sleep earlier to ensure they get their nine hours. That might mean cutting back on after-school activities so they aren't trying to cram in as much or telling them to sleep instead of doing homework late at night. (Encourage them to use their time wisely between classes and after school instead!) Ultimately, good sleep equals good grades.

Hopefully, our school system will change to reflect science. Until then, check out [SleepFoundation.org/teens-and-sleep](https://www.sleepfoundation.org/teens-and-sleep) to learn more about helping your teens get the sleep they need.

To your great smiles and better health,



# THE BEST SLEEPING POSITION

## for Preventing Neck and Back Pain

Have you ever awoken from a night's sleep, ready to take on the day, but instead of feeling rested, you notice your neck or back is killing you? Then, for the next few days, you try to avoid turning your head or bending over, resulting in funny stares from coworkers or strangers.

While this happens to everyone now and again, it's not normal and should be a cause for concern if it occurs often. More likely than not, how you sleep is the culprit. Most of us sleep in whatever position feels most comfortable when we lie down, but that doesn't mean it's the best position for our bodies.

So, if you frequently start your morning with neck or back pain, here are the sleeping positions you should avoid and the position most likely to provide much-needed relief.

### Sleeping Positions That Cause Neck or Back Pain

#### No. 1: Sleeping on Your Stomach

By sleeping on your stomach, you extend and compress your spine abnormally, leading to pain and tightness in your lower back. If you can picture it, sleeping on your stomach forces your spine into a "U" shape, with your lower back (where your spine attaches to your pelvis) at the bottom of the "U." When you hold this position for hours while asleep, the muscles at the junction of the "U" become incredibly tight, irritating the nerves in that area. On top of that, sleeping on your stomach also puts significant pressure on the abdomen and internal organs.

#### No. 2: Sleeping on Your Side

When you sleep on your side, you still force your spine into that same "U" shape, but instead of the lower part of your back being at the bottom of the "U," the middle of your back sags toward the floor.



This causes the muscles and tendons that connect to your top side (the side of your body pointing toward the ceiling) to become shortened. Meanwhile, the connections to the side of your body against the bed become lengthened. This can leave you feeling imbalanced and tight, especially near the anterior or oblique muscles on the side of your stomach.

### How to Sleep to Prevent Neck and Back Pain

If you want to avoid waking up with neck or back pain, the best way to sleep is on your back. By sleeping flat on your back, you promote the natural curve of your spine and avoid putting excess pressure on your organs. Sleeping on your back also allows the muscles and tendons on each side of your spine to balance appropriately without one side becoming longer or shorter than the other due to compression.

### Tips for Changing Your Sleep Position

If you've slept on your stomach or side for many years, it may be difficult to adjust to back sleeping, even though it's the healthier option. Fortunately, you can easily retrain your body using pillows. When you're ready to try back sleeping, grab four pillows before you crawl into bed and place them in these four positions.

- Pillow 1: Under your knees.
- Pillow 2: Beneath your lower back.
- Pillow 3: On your left side, against your hips and stomach.
- Pillow 4: On your right side, against your hips and stomach.

These cushions should help make back sleeping more comfortable and prevent you from rolling into your previously preferred position while you sleep. If you have trouble dozing off, try different pillow sizes and densities until you find the best fit. After sleeping this way for a while, back sleeping will become a habit!

# PASTA MAKER TURNS VEGETABLES

## — INTO NUTRITIOUS, DELICIOUS PASTA —

Do you want to eat healthier, but vegetables just aren't your thing? What about pasta? Does that sound more like your style?

If so, healthy eating just got a little easier — and more fun. Yes, we said fun! Philips has created an artisan pasta maker that lets you make pasta from any liquid. While there are many videos



online of people adding strawberry milk or root beer to their pasta makers, this product actually offers a really easy way for people to incorporate full servings of veggies into their lives without having to suffer through a plate full of steamed broccoli or spinach. All you need to do is add flour and slowly pour your chosen liquid into the top of the machine, and *voilà!* The pasta squeezes out the front into your preferred form, ready to boil and enjoy!

The recommended daily amount of vegetables for Americans is approximately 2 1/2 cups a day, which can seem like a lot if you're trying to force them down. Of course, eating whole veggies with every meal is always best, but if you or your child is a picky eater, pasta isn't a bad way to get that minimum amount in. But how do you turn a vegetable into a pasta? You blend it! Simply add your desired amount of veggies to a blender with

enough water to make it easy to pour into the machine, and you're done!

So, if you decide to go the pasta route, here are a few vegetables we recommend blending up:

- Spinach
- Tomatoes
- Kale
- Avocados
- Beets
- Peas
- Zucchini
- Carrots

If you want to mix it up, you can always blend multiple vegetables together!

Also, you don't need the pasta maker to make your vegetable pasta dreams a reality — you can use this same method to make it by hand, too! But, if you're interested in the pasta-maker route, you can find it online by looking up "Philips Artisan Pasta & Noodle Maker."

## TAKE A BREAK!



## WALNUT AND BLUE CHEESE TOMATO SALAD

Inspired by FeastingAtHome.com



### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup walnuts
- 2 lbs ripe heirloom tomatoes
- Kosher salt, to taste
- Black pepper, to taste
- 1/4 cup smoked blue cheese, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp fresh dill
- Chopped fresh Italian parsley, to taste
- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tbsp red wine or balsamic vinegar
- 1 garlic clove, finely minced

### DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350 F. On a baking sheet, toast the walnuts in the oven for 12-14 minutes.
2. Wash and slice the tomatoes. Place slices on a platter, slightly overlapping. Sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste.
3. Scatter toasted walnuts and blue cheese on top, followed by dill and preferred amount of parsley.
4. In a small bowl, whisk olive oil, wine or vinegar, and garlic to make the dressing.
5. Spoon dressing evenly over salad and serve.