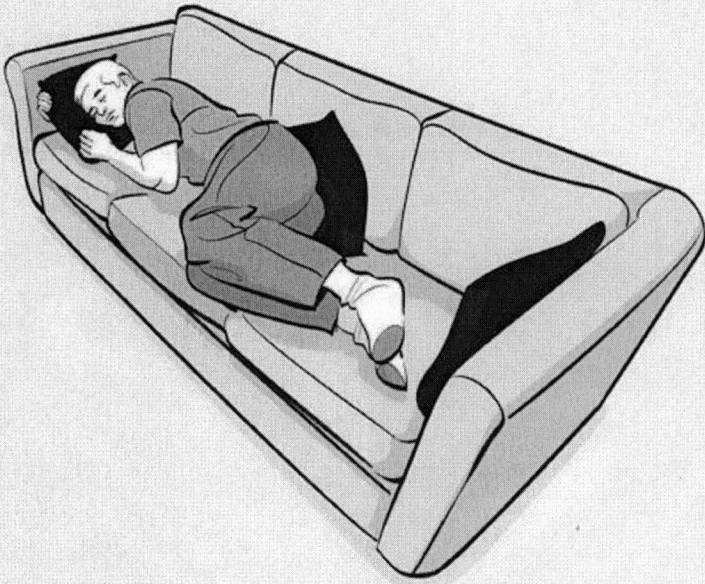


How Long to Nap



10 to 20 Minutes

This power nap is ideal for a boost in alertness and energy, experts say. This length usually limits you to the lighter stages of non-rapid eye movement (NREM) sleep, making it easier to hit the ground running after waking up.

30 Minutes

Some studies show sleeping this long may cause sleep inertia, a hangover-like groggy feeling that lasts for up to 30 minutes after waking up, before the nap's restorative benefits become apparent.

60 Minutes

This nap is best for improvement in remembering facts, faces and names. It includes slow-wave sleep, the deepest type. The downside: some grogginess upon waking up.

90 Minutes

This is a full cycle of sleep, meaning the lighter and deeper stages, including REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, typically likened to the dreaming stage. This leads to improved emotional and procedural memory (i.e. riding a bike, playing the piano) and creativity. A nap of this length typically avoids sleep inertia, making it easier to wake up.

Siestas? Sí!

Siesta time, 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., is ideal, though it depends on when people wake up and go to bed. Napping later in the day can interfere with falling asleep at night.



Where to Nap?

In a parked car, under a desk, lying on a couch—whatever works, experts say. But to avoid a deep sleep, it's best to sit slightly upright.



A Nation of Nappers

34%

Slightly more than one-third of adults in the U.S. say they take a nap on a typical day.

Exercise and Naps

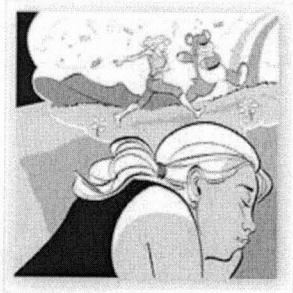


37% vs. 30%

People who said they'd had vigorous exercise in the past 24 hours were more apt to nap than those who hadn't.

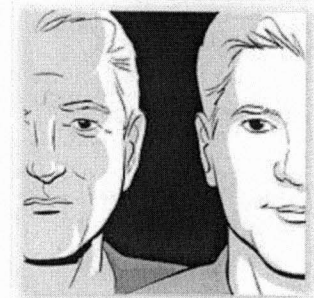
Reducing the Sleep Deficit

Healthy adults who don't get as much as sleep as they'd like should nap. A person who dreams during a short nap likely is sleep-deprived. For conditions like insomnia or sleep apnea, napping isn't recommended.



Naps: Wasted on the Young

The drive for longer naps is higher for the young—adolescents, college students and individuals through their 20s. As we age there is a tendency to take and be satisfied with shorter naps.



Sources: Pew Research Social & Demographic Trends, 2009; American Academy of Sleep Medicine; David Dinges, Ilene Rosen, Perelman School of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania; Rafael Pelayo, Stanford University School of Medicine's Sleep Medicine Center; Sara Mednick, University of California, Riverside; Leon Lack, Nicole Lovato, Flinders University, Australia; Kimberly Cote, Brock University, Canada; Sara Alger, University of Notre Dame