

Sleep Deprivation and Insomnia

The changing social environment of adolescents can often change their sleep patterns at a time when their growth and development require additional sleep for health. Although adolescents should generally get around 9 hours of sleep each night, early morning school scheduling, extracurricular activities, homework, employment, and desired social time with peers or on the Internet can make it difficult for them to get sufficient sleep. Sleep deprivation can affect physical and mental health and has been associated with higher rates of overweight and obesity, depression, somatic complaints (such as headaches and stomachaches), fatigue, and difficulties with concentration. These physical and psychological effects of inadequate sleep can also affect school performance and thus contribute to school problems. Health teaching and health promotion should include information to promote sufficient sleep.

Tanning

The quest for an attractive appearance leads many teenagers to excessive sunbathing and artificial means for tanning. However, this practice has serious long-term risks, and adolescents should be educated regarding the detrimental effects of sunlight on the skin (see Sunburn, [Chapter 13](#)). Long-term effects include premature aging of the skin; increased risk of skin cancer; and, in susceptible individuals, phototoxic reactions.

The increasing popularity of artificial tanning has prompted concern from health professionals regarding the use of sunlamps and tanning machines. The long-term effects of tanning machines are similar to those of the sun; dermatologists do not recommend tanning by this means. Those who insist on using tanning equipment should be warned that goggles must be worn in tanning booths to prevent serious corneal burning. Education on the use of sunscreens, including hypoallergenic products, with a sun protective factor (SPF) of at least 15 and a non-alcohol base without lanolin, parabens, or fragrance, is important. Broad-spectrum sunscreens that protect against both ultraviolet A and B (UVA and UVB) are the most effective. Self-tanning creams safely stimulate the appearance of a tan; however, teens using these products