



## CAVEMEN, SLEEP, AND HOW TO GET IT

Do you feel it? The grogginess and body ache that comes with losing an hour during Daylight-Saving Time? Let me tell ya, it's even worse with kids (am I right, parents?). The good news is in a few short days our bodies will get used to the change and we can go right back to feeling our normal selves. But what if your normal self still isn't getting adequate, restorative sleep? The secrets to a better night's sleep can be found in our prehistoric ancestors, the cavepeople! Yes, that's right, the cavepeople.

BY ANDREA JERVINIS

### Enough Sleep

First, what is considered an appropriate amount of sleep? According to the [American Academy of Sleep Medicine and Sleep Research Society](#), adults should sleep 7-9 hours to support optimal health. This may seem impossible with busy work and life schedules, but prioritizing sleep is important to maintain crucial bodily functions. Without sleep, our batteries are not able to recharge. And, guess what?! There is no such thing as "catching up on sleep." The sleep you lose cannot be made up, so catch your 7-9 hours as often as possible.

### The Caveman's Perspective

Back to the cavemen, though. It's important to understand how cavepeople slept in order for us to know our own genes, and what they crave to get a good night's sleep. Imagine you're a caveperson and think about the following: Where do I sleep? A cave. What are the characteristics of a cave? Dark, cool and damp. Similarly, the modern human body rests best in a similar environment.



### Dark

Make your bedroom as dark as possible - this helps your brain produce melatonin, the sleep hormone. Use blackout curtains and dim or turn off the lights on any electronic device, like an alarm clock, in your room.



#### About Andrea Jervinis, ATC, LAT

Andrea is a Reno, NV-based athletic trainer for Work Right NW. On top of working as an ATC in the collegiate, clinic and industry settings, she has also held positions as a Sports Information Director, Social Media Manager and Website Content Planner. Her secret talent is singing opera.

### Cool and Damp

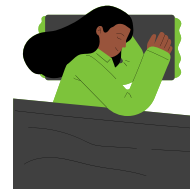
Our body temperature starts to decrease as we get closer to bedtime. Keeping the room cooler ([between 60 and 67 degrees Fahrenheit](#)) sends signals to our bodies that it's time for bed. Being too warm can cause sleep disturbances. The same issue occurs when the environment is too dry. If you live in a dry environment, using a humidifier while you sleep can help keep the room cool and prevent you from waking up feeling dehydrated.



### Bonus: White Noise

Another common element for a caveperson's sleep - falling asleep to the sound of insects - nature's white noise. White noise is great to drown out other noises that may occur while you are sleeping. Use a continuous white noise machine or a fan.

### Sleep and Restoration



Our sleep cycle is similar to our prehistoric ancestors. If things don't sound, look or feel right, we wake up. Using these tips for an optimal sleep environment can signal your brain and body that all is well, allowing you to get the sleep and restoration you need.

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