Sleeping is one of the most important things you do in your day, yet studies show 1 in 3 Americans don’t get enough sleep. Getting high-quality sleep with few interruptions and enough of it each night is critical to your health.

Dr. Barbara Bendlin, University of Wisconsin-Madison, published a study in 2017 that found people who reported more sleepiness during the day and not feeling rested after a night of sleep showed more brain changes related to Alzheimer’s disease. Scientists are still trying to figure out if poor sleep causes Alzheimer’s disease-related brain changes, or if the brain changes cause sleep disturbance. But it is clear there is a connection.

Your behaviors during the day, and especially before bedtime, can have an impact on your sleep. They can promote healthy sleep or contribute to sleeplessness. Below are 9 sleep tips and strategies to help you improve your sleep.

1. Aim for 7–9 hours of sleep each night.
2. Prioritize sleep and invest in a quality mattress.
3. Start a relaxing evening routine that includes dim lights (but not smartphones, TVs, or other screens) and peaceful thoughts.
4. Limit daytime naps to 30–60 minutes.
5. No electronics or bright screens before bed.
7. Avoid eating right before bed.
8. Exercise during the day, but not right before bed.
9. Limit your alcohol intake, especially right before bed.

Learn more
Visit the National Institute on Aging webpage “A Good Night’s Sleep” at www.nia.nih.gov/health/good-nights-sleep
Find resources from the Wisconsin Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center at www.adrc.wisc.edu/learn-more