



The EnergyPod® by Metronaps®

SLEEP RESEARCH

THE SHORT AND LONG (ABOUT) NAPPING

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Humans in their adult years compared to most other species don't usually nap. Napping is part of the sleep cycle of infants and children, and is quite common in the elderly population. There is a natural and biological propensity to nap during the day. This is due to a dip in the circadian rhythm of the body – the 24 hour sleep wake cycle that is determined both by the daylight cycle, and by the body's internal 24 hour cycle. The 2 sleepest points in the body's 24 hour cycle are between 2 am and 4 am (the worst time to have to wake up), and between 1 pm and 3 pm. This afternoon dip in the cycle is due to the fact that the waking effect of daylight hasn't quite kicked in fully, and the sleep pressure (the urge to sleep that accumulates from being awake) is starting to accumulate and make us sleepy. Add to that the effect of lunch, and this explains why a nap around 2pm might really be desirable. Of course some cultures have been napping in the afternoon for these and other reasons forever. In many Mediterranean countries and especially in Spain, land of the siesta, the scorching summer afternoon sun is another good reason to take a nap... a long nap.

The short and long (about) naps

Many studies have confirmed that napping is good for our health, and improves mood, memory, productivity and creativity. Irritability (or burnout) from overwork can be reduced by napping. In 2007, a study from the Harvard School of Public health looking at over 24,000 subjects showed that napping at least 30 minutes a day 3 days a week decreased mortality from heart disease by 40 %. Shorter naps reduced mortality by 12%. This is likely because napping decreases production of the body's natural stress hormones. NASA conducted studies on sleepy pilots and astronauts and found that they made fewer errors after taking a 40 minute nap, pointing to the positive effects of naps on critical motor and mental skills. Other studies have found that longer naps (up to 90 minutes) can improve creativity and executive decision-making skills.

The power nap

The power nap is a short nap, usually 20-30 minutes, in a dark quiet environment designed to provide a brief rest without entering deep sleep. A long nap can cause the sensation of grogginess or disorientation upon awakening (sleep inertia) that can actually interfere with mental and motor performance up to several hours after awakening. We usually don't (but may) enter deep sleep within 20 minutes of napping

unless we are extremely sleep deprived or have a sleep disorder such as narcolepsy. Power naps have been shown not to interfere with the circadian rhythm as long as they are not too close to bed time (before 4pm). Also, they have been shown not to effect total sleep time during the night's sleep.

Where and how to powernap? At your desk, in your parked car, on a sofa, in a comfortable armchair, or in an EnergyPod® (made by Metronaps®). This is an example of the perfect nap environment: very comfortable, dark, and quiet. You may also benefit from some relaxing and calming music played at low volume. The importance of relaxation for napping led us to create Music for Dreams; soothing piano music performed and recorded especially for the purpose of inducing sleep.

Other types of interesting naps:

You don't have to nap every day, but certainly on days where you have missed out on some sleep the night before, you might plan on a nap before you get too sleepy, a "planned nap". If you have to drive, consider a "caffeine nap". A cup of coffee just before your power nap, the caffeine kicks in just about when you awake from your nap. If you are driving and are overcome by fatigue, pull over immediately and take an "emergency nap".

Medical uses of naps.

Naps are recommended in the treatment guidelines of the American Academy of Sleep Medicine for the treatment of Narcolepsy. A serious sleep disorder which causes extreme sleepiness, and often uncontrollable episodes of sudden sleep (cataplexy). Napping can help control the disorder but is usually just part of the overall treatment which usually includes medications to stay awake.

The PAP-NAP:

Another new medical use of naps is the PAP-NAP. A 60-90 minute nap in the sleep specialist's office used to help sleep apnea patients who are on CPAP treatment. CPAP (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) is a medical treatment that prevents collapse of the breathing passage at night and also prevents snoring in patients suffering from sleep apnea. During the PAP-NAP, a sleep technician can help the patient try different CPAP masks, and adjust settings on the CPAP machine. This desensitization process has been shown to improve the success of CPAP treatment.

Napping in good company:

To Nap! Just 20 minutes can help reverse some of the effects of too little sleep, and can help your mood, your work performance, and your general health. You're in good company: JFK and Ronald Reagan napped, so did Salvador Dali. He didn't have an EnergyPod, so he napped sitting in an armchair with a spoon in his hand and a plate on the floor; as soon as he fell asleep the spoon fell on the plate and woke him up ... the Dali nap!

At BlueSleep, we have an EnergyPod®, for staff, patients, and local overworked Wall Streeters. Our Artistic Director, Magdalena Baczevska created the 20 minute napping track found in the EnergyPods around the world including at Google Headquarters, and many university campuses. The 20 minute piece was very carefully composed to include a several minute hypnagogic introduction followed by a 15 minute quiet middle section, and an exciting one minute hypnopompic wake up jingle. Find an EnergyPod near you and try it!, or listen to BlueSleep's "Music for Dreams" available at itunes or at BlueSleepMusic.com.



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Dr. Jordan C. Stern is Founder and Director of the BlueSleep Snoring and Sleep Apnea Center in New York City's Financial District. He is a best selling author and sleep expert board certified in Otolaryngology and Sleep Medicine. He has participated in the development and clinical trials of new home sleep testing devices, and has published and lectured widely on the subject of sleep apnea and head and neck cancer with over 100 publications and presentations to his name. At BlueSleep, Dr. Stern takes a comprehensive approach to the diagnosis and treatment of sleep apnea and snoring. The center is unique, offering home sleep testing and personalized treatments including: in office tongue-base radiofrequency treatments, custom-made oral appliance therapy; as well as tongue strengthening exercises, weight loss, relaxation music, insomnia treatments, silent acid reflux treatment, and CPAP for severe cases. The on-site sleep experts include medical, surgical, and dental sleep specialists, speech therapists, audiologists and CPAP specialists. Dr. Stern is co-author of *Dropping Acid: The Reflux Diet Cookbook and Cure*, a New York Times best seller available at Amazon.com. Correcting reflux can lead to reducing sleep apnea, and is often part of the recommendations to achieve sleep health. He has also produced a three volume set of relaxation sleep music: "Music for Dreams" created and performed by world renowned pianist Magdalena Baczewska, available at BlueSleepMusic.com and itunes.com.

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