

# Do You Get Up Early: Is waking up early a Great Health Hack?

Some say that night owls are more likely to suffer a respiratory or gastrointestinal disease, diabetes, or a psychological disorder (namely, depression or anxiety) than early-morning counterparts ([see article](#) ). According to a study by researchers from the University of Colorado Boulder and the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, morning people are actually **happier than night owls**. Based on their research, getting up just an hour earlier than your usual time could reduce your risk of depression by 23 percent. The results were published online May 26, 2021, by *JAMA Psychiatry*.

DO YOU/CAN YOU  
DO THIS?

SHORT WELLNESS SELF-  
CHECKS

Research suggests that people who wake up early **tend to go to bed earlier and enjoy longer, better quality sleep.**

Benefits of early rising

- improved mood.
- better concentration.
- lower chance of obesity and other chronic diseases.

[See more](#)

Most of the research show correlation and not cause and effect. It could be that those who rise early have other

**These are the four steps that converted the night owls into morning larks: [From the NY Post](#)**

- **Rise and shine:** Wake up two to three hours earlier than usual and maximize outdoor light exposure in the morning. Research has shown that light decreases your body's production of the sleep-inducing melatonin hormone. So throwing open your curtains to let the sun in, or eating breakfast on the porch or by a window, provides a free morning boost. Plus, getting up earlier in the morning helps you feel sleepy earlier in the evening.
- **Lights out:** At the end of the day, you want to do the opposite: limit light exposure and hit the hay two to three hours earlier than usual. Now's the time to increase your melatonin levels, so it's important to turn off the lights — and to avoid the blue light from screens, in particular — to cue your body that it's time to wind down.
- **Stick to a schedule:** Keep sleep and wake times fixed on both work days and days off. While it's tempting to take advantage of the weekend to stay up late and sleep in, it throws your body's circadian rhythm out of whack. Instead, keep the same schedule (within 15 and 30 minutes) every single day.
- **Move up your meals:** Have breakfast as soon as possible after waking up; eat lunch at the same time each day; and don't do dinner after 7 p.m. Participants in the study also stopped drinking caffeine after 3 p.m. If it's impossible to move up dinner or other evening activities, then shorten them, or see which ones can be done on alternate days, so that you're still wrapping things up earlier.