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account for more than half of car accidents caused by drivers who either doze off at the wheel or whose reaction times are slow because they're sleepy. So before committing to bringing home your little brother from that late movie, ask yourself if you're up for it.

### BEAUTY SLEEP: NOT A MYTH

A case of puffy eyes isn't the only ugly consequence of staying up all night, according to dermatologist David E. Bank, M.D. Chronic sleep deprivation (a technical term for regularly getting less than seven hours a night) can make you produce stress hormones that may cause breakouts—just what you need when you're already crabby. Plus, when you miss out on sleep, your blood pressure and pulse drop, which can lead to sallow or dry skin and even rashes. Not a good look.

### RESTING, EASY

Okay, so now that you know why sleep is super important, how do you make sure to get enough?

- Try your hardest to go to bed and get up at around the same time every day. It helps to keep your body clock

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in check, so you won't be dozing off at lunchtime and wide awake at 1 a.m. In fact, even if you stayed up till all hours watching a Colin Farrell movie marathon, you're still better off waking up around your regular time—you can take a nap later if you're totally wiped. But try not to do it for more than 30 minutes—it'll throw off your schedule.

- It's always great to wind down and destress before you nod off. Do some stretches, deep breathing, and a few yoga poses. Don't get major exercise right before bedtime, though—it kicks your metabolism

## WHAT A NIGHTMARE

Sometimes restless nights have a more serious cause. See your doctor if any of the following sounds familiar:

- **Insomnia:** You have a really hard time falling or staying asleep; you wake up too early or wake up feeling unrefreshed.
- **Sleepwalking:** No one is entirely sure what causes involuntary walking or movement during sleep, but if it happens often it can be dangerous—sleepwalkers sometimes have no idea what they're doing or where they're going.
- **Sleep apnea:** This is when you temporarily stop breathing in your sleep. It can be caused by obesity, or enlarged adenoids or tonsils. The symptoms are snoring, choking, difficulty breathing, and heavy sweating.

For more information, go to [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org).

into gear, which is why you feel so wired after a workout.

- Pick up that Russian novel you've been trying to get through for the past year and a half. It's put you to sleep before, right?

- Pop in the *Garden State* soundtrack (soothing music works wonders) and take a relaxing bath.
- On nights when you crawl under the covers only to lie there thinking about all the things you have to do the next day, try making a list—it'll help calm you down. If you can't stop staring at the ceiling, move to another room until you're tired. Otherwise you'll start to associate your bed, which should be a happy place, with the anxiety that's keeping you up. Now put on your pajamas and hit the sack already! ■