

Sleep and weight management

Find information and resources to help you improve your sleep at [geisinger.org/stbw](https://www.geisinger.org/stbw)

Sleep is as important as diet and exercise in maintaining a healthy weight.

Multiple studies have shown a relationship between a lack of sleep and increased cravings for high fat and carbohydrate foods, as well as consuming an increased number of calories.

Lack of sleep also contributes to:

- Insulin resistance
- Higher cortisol levels
- Higher blood sugar levels
- Increased risk for diabetes and heart disease



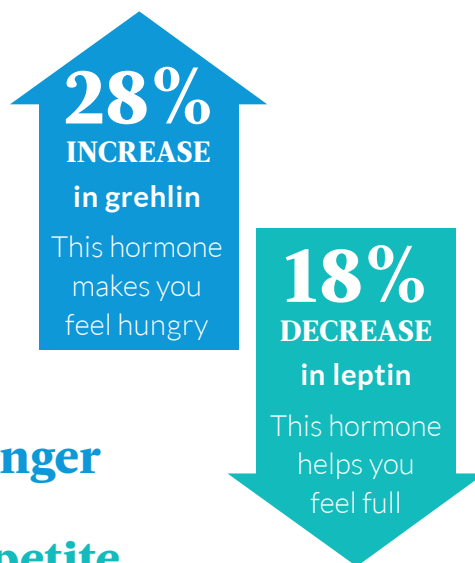
The science behind hunger

In one study, participants who slept only 4 hours a night for 2 weeks had dramatic changes to their hunger hormones (**leptin** and **ghrelin**).

Participants experienced:

24% INCREASE IN hunger

23% INCREASE IN appetite



Lack of sleep also reduces activity in part of the brain that controls decision-making and increases activity in areas linked to rewards and food cravings.

Try these tips to control food cravings!

- Keep track of your cravings over 1 – 2 weeks and look for patterns
- Record the triggers that might be contributing to your cravings

If poor or insufficient sleep is contributing to your food cravings, try:

- Keeping a consistent sleep schedule
- Sleeping in a dark, quiet, cool room
- Avoid eating too close to bedtime

Watch this video to learn more.

[How sleep affects weight: The link between poor sleep and weight management | Dr. Anne Marie Morse](#)

