

Etc. Etc. Etc.

## Beating the Clock

Have you ever woken up right before your alarm clock goes off? You've lost those last 5 minutes of sleep and wonder why you even set the alarm in the first place. [Mentalfloss.com](http://Mentalfloss.com) looked into this occurrence and discovered that our body's internal clock might be just as good as that alarm. The human brain's suprachiasmatic nucleus, a clump of nerves at the center of the brain, is in charge of the body's circadian rhythm and "loves predictability." Human bodies are efficient when they have a routine, so if you tend to go to sleep at the same time each night, and wake up at the same time, too, you might be able to ditch the alarm clock and use your body's natural instincts. Here's the scientific reasoning. Your body's schedule is maintained by a protein called PER. The level drops at night, which also lowers your blood pressure, slows your heart rate and makes you tired. If you follow a routine sleep schedule, your body learns to increase PER levels in time for your



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alarm. "About an hour before you're supposed to wake up, PER levels rise (along with your body temperature and blood pressure). To prepare for the stress of waking, your body releases a cocktail of stress hormones, like cortisol." Then, your sleep becomes lighter and lighter, eventually waking up before your alarm goes off. Voila! Your natural alarm clock.

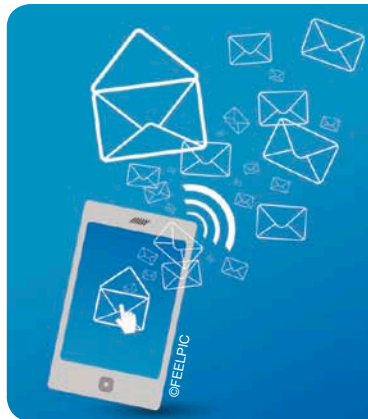
**"People who snore always fall asleep first."**

*Author unknown*

## Beware of Sleptexting

It is easy to see how younger generations are fixated on their smartphones. But, could this fixation lead to a growing phenomenon known as *sleptexting*? Research from Michael Gelb, founder of the Gelb Center in New York, NY, has looked into sleptexting—when people (usually adolescents and young adults) send text messages while asleep. Although too soon to consider it a disorder, sleptexting is being classified as a parasomnia (e.g., sleepwalking, night terrors). Gelb believes sleptexting usually occurs in the 2 hours after a person falls asleep, which interrupts REM sleep. He has found that sleptexting can increase among those taking some medications, and of course, for those who go to sleep with their phones nearby.

*Atlantic.com*



## Sleep Myths, Facts

- During sleep, your brain rests. **(Your body rests, but your brain remains active.)**
- The older you get, the fewer hours of sleep you need. **(Average adults should get 7 to 9 hours of sleep.)**

• Snoring isn't harmful. **(It's harmless for most people, but it can be a symptom of sleep apnea, a life-threatening condition.)**

• Insomnia is only characterized by difficulty falling asleep. **(Insomnia is characterized by three other factors: waking up too early and not being able to fall back asleep; frequent awakenings; and waking up feeling unrefreshed.)**

*National Sleep Foundation*

**"The worst thing in the world is to try to sleep and not to."**

*F. Scott Fitzgerald*



**off the mark.com** by Mark Parisi



**JANUARY Safety Photo of the Month**



**"This isn't unsafe; I'm just assessing risk."**

Photo by Ashok Garlapati, Kuwait Chapter

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