

## Nap and coffee combo clears neurotransmitters so buzz more effective

It might sound crazy: conventional wisdom is that [caffeine interferes with sleep](#). But if you caffeinate immediately before napping and sleep for 20 minutes or less, you can exploit a quirk in the way both sleep and caffeine affect your brain to maximize alertness. Here's the science behind the idea.

To understand a coffee nap, you have to understand how caffeine affects you. After it's absorbed through your small intestine and passes into your bloodstream, it crosses into your brain. There, it [fits into receptors](#) that are normally filled by a similarly-shaped molecule, called [adenosine](#).

Adenosine is a byproduct of brain activity, and when it accumulates at high enough levels, it plugs into these receptors and makes you feel tired. But with the caffeine blocking the receptors, it's [unable to do so](#). As Stephen R. Braun writes in [Buzz: the Science and Lore of Alcohol and Caffeine](#), it's like "putting a block of wood under one of the brain's primary brake pedals."

**Read the full, original story: [Scientists agree: Coffee naps are better than coffee or naps alone](#)**