

PILLOW SHOPPING GUIDE

It's Not All Fluff: Your Pillow May Be Robbing You of Sleep

Saggy pillow giving you nightmares? Reset your sleep with a new pillow.

Many of us can't dream of sleeping without our favourite pillow. We're even so attached we can't part with them when traveling, so we bring along that go-to pillow for the trip. And yet, for all those times your head hits the pillow, how often do you think about whether that old standby is really giving you the right support for a good night's rest?

Research from the Better Sleep Council (BSC) reveals that, when it comes purchasing our pillows, we undervalue our head's rest. In fact, only one in three people who bought a mattress in the past five years also purchased pillows, according to a BSC consumer survey.

The other two-thirds of us? We're hanging on to lumpy, frumpy pillows. When we *do* pick up fresh ones, research shows that many of us settle for bargain-basement sources.

It's an interesting behavioural pattern: we *adore* pillows, but we don't always *value* them. And when we do find that favourite pillow, we act as if it should last forever. But the materials in pillows, like any soft products, wear over time.

Knowing when it's time to say goodbye to your old pillow

BSC research indicates we should reset with a new pillow every 2.8 years. What happens, though, is that we find "the one" and then hang on to it. Each night, we put on our favourite PJs, grab our favourite blanket and pillow, and assume we're going to have a perfect night's sleep. But what's wrong with this picture? The pillow is old, flat and not giving us

the comfort we deserve. At this point, it's time to find a new pillow that will give us sweet dreams.

Understanding the possibilities when it comes to pillows

Consumers aren't the only people focusing on pillows these days. Sleep product manufacturers are now using their best materials and product engineering to prop up the head and neck. Shop for a pillow made by an industry-leading sleep products provider and you'll find the same collection of features and materials you've come to expect in mattresses and other sleep accessories.

It's fair to wonder what the fuss is about. Would it really hurt to keep plopping your noggin on an old saggy pillow from the '90s? Well, only if you don't mind a musty face and a stiff spine.

Pillows give your head and neck the support they need throughout the night, and by supporting your head, they promote healthy spine alignment. They also aid with temperature control. The fabric, or combination of fabrics, in a well-made pillow or cover keeps you cool and dry. It regulates temperature and prevents moisture from piling between your pillow and your face.

For those of us who complain about sleep, pillows may be the source of our woes. Room temperature, another common cause for poor sleep, can also be corrected with the proper pillow. The ideal cushion surrounds your face space with cool air and can remedy an unintentionally tropic bedroom.