



Mattress Facts - Is Firmer Really Better

People spend an average of 1/3 of their lives on their mattress. As such, it is an important investment. A typical mattress has the average lifespan of 8-10 years. If your mattress shows signs of unevenness, creaking or leaves you feeling tired and sore in the morning, it should be replaced.

If you have a partner, you should bring them with you when choosing a mattress. Lay down on the mattress for 10-15 minutes to get an idea of how your body will react to it. Purchasing the best mattress for your needs has a lot to do with personal preferences, however there are some guidelines you should stick to:

- 1) **SIZE.** The mattress should be 6 inches longer than the tallest person sleeping on it. If you sleep with a partner, be sure to select queen or king size. Both are not only wider, but several inches longer than the standard double. Studies reveal that a healthy person moves 40-60 times a night with some 10-12 full body movements. Having enough room to move around is essential to a good night's sleep
- 2) **FIRMNESS.** A firmer mattress may not necessarily be better. In a study involving 313 adults with back pain, those assigned to a medium firm mattress experienced less back pain while lying and less pain upon waking than those assigned to an extra firm mattress. Mattress firmness is determined by the number of mattress coils. Keep in mind that heavier individuals will need a firmer mattress for more support.
- 3) **SUPPORT.** The most important feature of a mattress is its ability to support. The mattress should be suitably soft, conforming body curvatures by having a reasonable ability to equalize pressure. If the mattress is too soft, however, your body will feel as though it is sagging, and your muscles will have to work overtime to keep your spine in alignment. When shopping for your mattress, stretch out on your back and then assume your usual sleeping position. The mattress should support your body at all points. Pay close attention to the mattresses ability to support your hips and shoulders.
- 4) **QUALITY.** Purchase the highest quality mattress you can afford. You will be using your mattress more than any other appliance or piece of furniture you own. A high quality mattress will contribute to a better night's sleep, which will affect your alertness throughout the day.
- 5) **DURABILITY.** Purchasing a new mattress is a large investment, so it is important to ensure that your mattress will last. The type of materials, design and quality of construction impact the duration of a mattress, but the key to durability is the foundation. A foundation helps absorb impact to the mattress. Mattresses and foundations are designed to be used together, and a quality foundation can add years to the lifespan of your mattress.