

10 Tips to Improve Your Sleep

1 · **Avoid stimulants such as caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol**

Remember, chocolate has caffeine in it.

2 · **Exercise regularly**

But not too close to bedtime!

3 · **Eat well! Avoid caffeine, nicotine and alcohol before bed.**

Stay away from large meals close to bedtime and stick with a light snack if you're hungry. Don't drink fluids too close to bedtime to avoid waking to use the bathroom.

4 · **Be sure to get outside!**

Light exposure helps maintain a healthy sleep-wake cycle.

5 · **Establish a regular relaxing bedtime routine.**

Try to avoid emotionally upsetting conversations and activities before trying to go to sleep. If your thoughts become distracting, practice some deep breathing techniques to help relax you.

6 · **Associate your bed with sleep.**

It's not a good idea to use your bed for activities other than sleep such as watching TV, using a laptop, or reading. If your bedroom is where you spend most of your spare time, try using one end of the bed for reading, computer work, etc. and the other end of the bed for sleeping.

7 · **Ensure a pleasant & relaxing sleep environment.**

The mattress and pillow should be comfortable, the room should not be too hot or cold.

8 · **Choose a wake-up time and avoid napping during the day.**

Stick to a routine wake up and sleep time which promote a healthy sleep-wake pattern.

9 · **Keep the room dark.**

Sleep with as little light as possible. Use curtains or a sleep mask.

10 · **Use white noise or ear plugs.**

If you're someone that wakes from small noises around you, a constant sound (or blocking sound) can eliminate any distractions.

5 Tips for when you can't fall asleep

1 • **Don't check your clock constantly.** Staring at a clock in your bedroom, either when you are trying to fall asleep or when you wake in the middle of the night, can actually increase stress, making it harder to fall asleep. Try turning your clock's face away from you.

2 • **If you can't get to sleep in about 25 minutes, get up** and do a restful activity such as reading or listening to music until you are ready to return to bed. Be sure to keep the lights dim; bright light can stimulate your internal clock.

3 • **Try some deep breathing.** Close your eyes, and try taking deep, slow breaths, making each breath even deeper than the last.

4 • **Visualize a peaceful, restful place.** Close your eyes and imagine a place or activity that is calming and peaceful for you. Concentrate on how relaxed this place or activity makes you feel.

5 • **Relax your muscles.** Starting with your toes, tense all the muscles as tightly as you can, then completely relax. Work your way up from your feet to the top of your head.

Know Your Sleep Preferences

When it comes to sleep each person is different. What works for others may not work for you and vice versa. Be sure to know what works best for you for sleep that is healthy and restful.

I sleep best when _____

My sleep is disturbed when _____

I like to _____ before I go to bed

_____ helps me relax

I am most comfortable when my bed/room is _____

Thinking about _____ helps me fall asleep

My Own Tips to Try

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