



SLEEP HYGIENE

Sleep hygiene is routines or habits that promote more restful and restorative sleep. The following are good sleep hygiene tips to help you get better sleep:

- Try and go to bed only when you are sleepy
 - If you go to bed before you are sleepy you may find it difficult to fall asleep and may start to worry about stresses or about falling asleep
- Establish **regular bedtime routines** (sleep-wake schedule), including weekends
 - Get up at the same time each morning. Maintaining a reasonably **early awakening time** is one of the **important** time cues for the 24-hour **circadian** sleep-wake **rhythm**.
 - Regardless of how much or how little sleep you got during the prior night
 - Even if you have a bad night sleep and are tired it is important that you try to keep your daytime activities the same as you had planned
- **Avoid** daytime **naps**
 - Napping disrupts the sleep-wake cycle
 - If you nap at irregular times, this will further disrupt the sleep-wake cycle
 - Only nap if there is a safety concern
 - If you do nap, limit the nap length to 20 minutes in the early afternoon
- **Regularize** mealtimes and exercise time
 - **Exercising daily** will improve the quality of sleep, but try to avoid strenuous physical exertion 5 to 6 hours before bedtime
 - Exercise is preferable in the **morning**, if possible
 - Avoid large meals before bedtime
 - Don't go to bed too hungry or too full
- **Avoid within 6 hours** of bedtime, thus limit to early part of day only
 - Caffeine (latest 4pm)
 - Sources of caffeine include coffee (even decaf), tea, colas/sodas, chocolate, diet pills, pain pills (grandpa), anything that says "coffee flavoured"
 - Do not increase your caffeine intake the next day, this can keep you up again the following night
 - Alcohol (never use to initiate sleep)
 - Other stimulants (Energy drinks, guarana, ginseng, diet shakes)
- **Avoid within 3-4 hours** within bedtime
 - nicotine (stimulant)
 - late evening hard exercise (sex is the exception)



- **Avoid work-related activities** close to bedtime
- **Minimize**
 - Noise, light, and excessive temperature during sleep
 - Light from mobile phones & computers disrupt melatonin production and your circadian rhythm
 - Dark environments promote melatonin secretion
 - If needed, use earplugs, eye shades, or an electric blanket/air conditioner
- Engage in relaxing, pleasant activities 1 to 2 hours before bedtime to "**wind down**" from the stresses of the day.
 - Focus on positive thoughts at bedtime
- **Use the bedroom only for sleep and sex**
 - Do not read, watch TV, or do work in bed
 - This only serves to weaken the association your brain has that being in bed means going to sleep
- **When unable to fall asleep** within 30 minutes, get out of bed and go into another room
 - Dimly lit room
 - Engage only in relaxing and pleasant activities
 - Preferably return to sleep within 15 to 20 min, or when sleepy
- **Expose yourself to outdoor light** for 30 min within 15 min of **waking up**
 - Exposure to sunlight helps to set the body's circadian rhythm or internal clock so that you're more likely to fall asleep at night
- Use Hypnotics (**sleeping tablets**) only for up to two weeks at a time. Drawbacks of these drugs include:
 - Daytime somnolence
 - Rebound insomnia
 - Tolerance, tachyphylaxis, dependence due this cycle
- If racing thoughts predominate during bedtime, set aside 15-20 min "worry time" earlier during the day. Use this to think about or list worries, problems, concerns, etc.
- As a last resort, and under supervision of your doctor, and once all other sleep hygiene techniques have been adhered to 100%. Then if sleep restriction is chosen as a treatment option, determine average estimated sleep time. Restrict the time in bed to the average estimated sleep time and continue with the weekly sleep diary. Using the sleep diary, determine the sleep efficiency (total sleep time/time in bed x 100%) each week.
 - Increase time in bed by 15 to 20 min when sleep efficiency >90%
 - Decrease time in bed by 15 to 20 min when sleep efficiency <80%. Maintain time in bed if sleep efficiency is 80% to 90%.
 - Adjust the time in bed each week until the ideal sleep duration is obtained. The minimum time in bed is 5 hours per night

