

Sleep Hygiene

Sleep Hygiene is the concept that your environment and habits can be optimized for better sleep.



- If you experience sleep problems talk to your Primary Care Practitioner about what may be the right treatment for you.
- Good sleep hygiene won't always resolve sleep problems but may help.
- People with serious insomnia or sleep disorders such as obstructive sleep apnea may benefit but usually require other treatment.
- Sleep hygiene is individual, not "one size fits all".

Sleep Hygiene Tips

1. Try to go to bed and get up at around the same time each day (within a half hour).
2. Try to sleep when you feel tired or sleepy rather than spending too much time awake in bed.
3. Avoid caffeine after noon.
4. Avoid daytime sleeping- if you need to nap do so for less than an hour and before 3:00pm.
5. Use your bed only for sleeping. You want to associate your bed with restful sleeping and nothing else.
6. Avoid alcohol for 4-6 hours before bed. It can interrupt the quality of sleep.
7. Regular exercise can help you sleep but try not to do strenuous exercise in the 4 hours before bedtime.
8. Develop your own sleep rituals of things that remind your body that it is time to sleep. Wind down and relax for at least 30 minutes prior to sleep with soft music, relaxing stretches, breathing exercises, reading.

9. Dim the lights to allow for the release of melatonin (but not dim enough to hurt your eyes or put you at risk of falling).

10. Set aside 30-60 minutes of screen-free time before going to bed (no TV, computer, or cell phone). Blue wavelength light inhibits the release of melatonin and disrupts our circadian rhythm (our 24-hour internal clock that helps regulate cycles of alertness and sleepiness).

11. If your bladder regularly wakes you up, avoid liquids for at least 2 hours before bed (just make sure you hydrate enough during the day).

12. Make your bedroom as quiet and comfortable for sleeping as possible. A cooler room with enough blankets to stay warm is best. Use blackout curtains or an eye mask to block out early morning light if needed. Try using a white noise machine or app if noise is disrupting your sleep. Make sure your mattress and pillow are comfortable.

13. Try to keep your daytime routine the same, even if you have a bad night's sleep. Don't avoid activities because you feel tired (if you have insomnia this can reinforce it).

14. For some people sugary or spicy foods can disrupt sleep.

15. Open your curtains to expose yourself to sunlight as soon as you get up. Go outdoors in the morning if you can to expose yourself to sunlight. This helps set your circadian rhythm.



I wish you all good sleep...

Erin Curtin, Wellness Coordinator