

Sleep Hygiene



A Great Day Begins with a Good Night's Sleep

1. Maintain a regular sleep and wake time schedule including weekends.

A regular waking time helps with sleep onset at night. It is important to keep a regular bedtime and wake-time, even on the weekends.

2. Establish a regular bedtime routine.

Avoid activities before bedtime like working, paying bills or family problem-solving. Stress prior to sleep is linked to failing sleep quality. Try to “rest” and slow your body down, prior to bedtime.

3. Create a sleep-conducive environment that is dark, quiet, comfortable and cool.

Design your sleep environment to establish the conditions you need for sleep. Consider using blackout curtains, ear plugs, "white noise," humidifiers, fans and other devices.

4. Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillows.

Make sure your mattress is comfortable and supportive. The one you have been using for years may have exceeded its life expectancy – about 9 or 10 years for quality mattresses.

5. Avoid nicotine use close to bedtime.

Nicotine is a stimulant. Smoking before bed makes it more difficult to fall asleep. Difficulty sleeping is another reason to quit smoking.

6. Avoid caffeine close to bedtime.

Caffeine is a stimulant, which means it can produce an alerting effect. Avoiding caffeine within 6-8 hours of going to bed can help improve sleep quality.

7. Avoid alcohol close to bedtime.

Although many people think of alcohol as a sedative, it actually disrupts sleep, causing nighttime awakenings. Consuming alcohol leads to a night of less restful sleep.

8. Use your bedroom only for sleep.

Take work materials, computers and televisions out of the sleeping environment. If you associate a particular activity with anxiety about sleeping, omit it from your bedroom.

9. Finish eating at least 2-3 hours before your regular bedtime.

Eating too much may make you less comfortable when settling down for bed. Restrict fluids close to bedtime to prevent nighttime awakenings to go to the bathroom.

10. Exercise regularly.

In general, exercising regularly makes it easier to fall asleep and contributes to sounder sleep; however, finish your exercise at least 3 hours before bedtime.

