

Tips for a Better Night Sleep

1. Try to keep a consistent sleep schedule, i.e. waking up and going to bed around the same time. Irregular sleep patterns lead to poor sleep. The best time for restorative sleep is between 10:00pm-2:00am, so always aim to be asleep during these times.
2. Check your medication. Some medications can interfere with your sleep. Discuss this with your doctor.
3. To get the best quality sleep at night you need to expose yourself to sunlight during the day. Sunlight helps regulate your internal clock and keeps daytime fatigue at bay.
4. Studies show that exercise allows you to sleep better, so make exercise a part of your daily routine. However, exercise earlier rather than later, at least 2-3 hours before bedtime so your post-workout adrenaline boost does not keep you awake.
5. If you take power naps during the day, limit them to 10-30 minutes, otherwise you may find it more difficult to sleep at night.
6. Diet can play a key role in your quality of sleep. High sugar and low fibre diets mean lighter, less restorative sleep. Add fish oil, whole foods, probiotics and foods that help create serotonin, such as turkey, nuts and seeds, egg whites and cheese (tryptophan foods) to your diet. Avoid caffeine consumption after 2:00pm and alcohol before bed.
7. Keep a diary to track your activities throughout the day to see if there are any patterns that may be impacting your sleep.
8. Don't go to bed on a full stomach. Stop snacking 2-3 hours before bed. Also, limit what you drink before bed so you don't have to get up to use the bathroom during the night.
9. Develop relaxing activities before you sleep. Turn off all your electronics around 2 hours before bed, enjoy some light reading, or have a warm bath with Epson salts and lavender. You could even try doing some meditation. Enjoy a small cup of herbal tea such as chamomile.
10. Keep your bedroom slightly cool (around 65-75 degrees Fahrenheit). Use black-out curtains and make sure you have fresh air circulating.
11. Invest in a quality mattress and pillow containing natural fibres with no VOC's. (Volatile Organic Compounds)
12. Use a white noise machine if surrounding noises keep you up at night.
13. Keep all of your technology devices away from your sleep area. The blue light emitted by these devices have wave lengths that suppress energy production and stimulates excitatory cells and cortisol. Electronic devices also emit EMF's (Electromagnetic Fields) which can decrease the pineal gland's production of melatonin.
14. Don't toss and turn all night. Get up and do something relaxing like listening to music or engage in deep breathing exercises.
15. Keep a notebook by your bed so you can write down anything that you are worried about. This allows you to set your thoughts aside for tomorrow.
16. Practice positive affirmations. Instead of thinking "I am never going to fall asleep," change it to "I have the power to change my sleeping habits."
17. Follow through.