

SLEEP HYGIENE

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL SLEEP

(Intended for the typical adult, but not necessarily for children or adults with medical problems)

1. **Establish a regular sleep routine**, i.e., go to bed at the same time every night, and wake up at the same time every morning, **including weekends**.
2. **Get an adequate amount of sleep every night**. In general, most healthy adults need an average of 8 hours of sleep per night.
3. **Avoid eating or drinking heavily for 3 hours before bedtime**. A light bedtime snack may be helpful.
4. **Avoid caffeine within several hours of bedtime**. Caffeine is a stimulant that may affect your sleep up to 12 hours later.
5. **Avoid stress and worries at bedtime**. Consider a relaxing routine of taking a hot bath, reading a non-occupational-related book, or listening to soothing music before going to bed.
6. If possible, **avoid medicines in the evening that may stimulate you** and interrupt sleep.
7. **Avoid alcohol within 4 hours of bedtime**. Alcohol may cause awakenings later in the night.
8. **Avoid nicotine (cigarettes and other tobacco products), especially near bedtime**. Nicotine is a stimulant that may make falling asleep more difficult.
9. **Exercise regularly, but avoid strenuous exercise within 6 hours of bedtime**. Exercising right before bedtime will make it more difficult to fall asleep.
10. **Avoid naps except for a 10 to 15 minute nap 8 hours after arising**. As naps may be beneficial in some sleep disorders, consult your physician first.
11. **Sleep on comfortable pillows and a comfortable supportive mattress**. If you have allergies, use allergy-free bedding.
12. **Your bedroom should be quiet, dark, comfortable, cool and free of interruptions**. Consider using ear plugs, "white noise", a fan, eye shades, blackout curtains, etc. Pets, pagers and phones should not be allowed to interrupt your sleep.
13. **Do not expose yourself to bright light if you have to get up during the night**. It may make it difficult to get back to sleep.
14. **Make your bedroom a haven for sleep**. Remove study materials, computer, television, and other anxiety-provoking objects from the bedroom. Turn the clock face away and don't check the time if you awaken during the night.

