
How to have a Good Night's Sleep

For many people a good night's sleep is elusive. Both sleep quality and quantity are important ingredients to feeling well rested and highly productive the next day.

No Screens for 1 Hour (at least) – our screen based devices run on the blue spectrum of light. This spectrum actually increases our main stress hormone, cortisol. Cortisol acts to suppress our main sleep hormone, melatonin. Melatonin levels increase in the evening as light levels decrease. The role of melatonin is to lull us into sleep and to keep us asleep. The role of cortisol is to keep us awake and alert.

- For background noise if necessary choose soothing music.
- A better option is to read a real book under a yellow spectrum light.
- Sleep in a dark room

Pre-sleep Routine – develop a calming & consistent routine for the hour before bed. This will help ease your mind and body from a wakeful state into a relaxed state.

- Warm bath with relaxing essential oils (lavender) & Epsom salts.
- Listen to an enjoyable podcast or radio program.
- Write in a journal before bed.
- Meditate before bed.
- Connect with your partner or roommate.

Develop a Consistent Sleep Schedule between 9 to 11pm – Go to bed and get up at the same time every day, even on weekends, holidays and days off. Being consistent reinforces your body's sleep-wake cycle and helps promote better sleep at night.

- Falling asleep after 11pm can cause a cortisol spike

Get up if you Can't Fall Asleep – If you are not able to fall asleep within 15 minutes, get up and do something relaxing. Go back to bed when you are tired.

- Write down your stressors or tasks to get them out of your head.

Use your Bed for Sleep Related and Relaxing Activities Only – making the association between your bed and restful activities improves your ability to fall asleep and stay asleep.

- Definitely do not take your work to bed!

Protein Rich Snack in the Evening – instead of choosing a sweet snack in the evening, choosing a protein rich snack will help induce growth hormone, a secondary hormone that promotes better quality sleep.

Exercise in the Morning – exercising in the morning helps to wake us up and provide energy for the rest of the day. Exercising in the evening, however, can do the same thing, which counteracts our restful evening routine.

