

Sleep Hygiene

Morning Plan

- Routine is important. Get out of bed around the same time every day, weekends included, and once awake don't 'snooze' for an extra 10 minutes.
- Have something important or meaningful to get up for.

Day Plan

- Exercise but only during the day, avoid exercising in the late evening.
- Avoid taking naps, particularly late in the afternoon or after work in the evening.
- Maintain a healthy balance between stress and relaxation in your day (i.e., if work or study is stressful, make sure to take several gentle slow walks to even out the stress).
- Limit your intake of caffeine. No caffeine after midday is preferred.
- Do not eat, read, or watch TV in bed, use your bedroom for sleep and intimacy only.

Evening Plan

- Participate in calming activities and avoid heightening your senses before bedtime such as playing a competitive game, watching an exciting program on television or playing a stimulating computer game.
- Although drinking alcohol can sometimes create a feeling of being relaxed, if consumed within 5 hours of going to bed, it can contribute to night time awakenings.
- Avoid foods, beverages, and medications that may contain stimulants.
- Avoid eating large heavy meals or a lot of liquid close to bedtime. Do not go to bed too hungry or too full.
- Create a relaxing bedtime routine such as having a warm bath or warm herbal tea.

Bedroom Plan

- If worry keeps you awake, keep a 'to do' diary next to the bed. Write down all that you're worrying about for review the next day. This will help keep your mind clear.
- Keep the temperature in your bedroom comfortable.
- Keep your bedroom quiet, dark and tidy.

If You Can't Fall Asleep Plan

- Do not command yourself to go to sleep. This makes your mind and body more alert.
- Try not to focus on falling asleep by 'clock watching.' Turn the clock around.
- If after about 20 minutes you are unable to fall asleep, get out of bed and find a quiet place to do a quiet activity. You could read a non-suspenseful book or magazine, meditate, listen to music, or do a relaxing puzzle until sleepy.
- Do not use alcohol to help you fall asleep.

If You Have Medicine to Help You Sleep

- Place your sleep medicine and a glass of water close to your bed. Take your medication as prescribed by your doctor. If taking over the counter medication, take only if you are unable to fall asleep, or if you wake up within a couple hours of falling asleep.
- Some sleep medications may make you drowsy and tired the next day. Notify your doctor or pharmacist if this happens and do not perform any activities that require alertness.

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