

## Sleep Hygiene Improvement Guidelines

- **Limit caffeine**

Caffeine stays in the system for several hours after you consume it. Avoid caffeine in the afternoon and evening.

- **Limit alcohol**

Avoid drinking alcohol in the evening or as a sleep aid.

Alcohol may make you feel drowsy, but it usually causes awakenings during the night and less refreshing sleep.

- **Limit fluids in the evening**

Fluid intake at night can lead to frequent awakenings to use the bathroom.

- **Exercise regularly**

Moderate exercise is not only good for better physical and mental health, but it can improve sleep.

Avoid exercise right before bedtime as this can lead to insomnia

- **Avoid heavy meals right before bedtime**

If you are hungry at bedtime, try a light snack such as milk, peanut butter, or cheese. These foods contain chemical that your body uses to produce sleep.

- **Keep your sleep environment comfortable**

A quiet, dark, cool room is usually best. Make sure the temperature in your room is comfortable for you.

- **Avoid clock watching**

Watching the clock can lead to stress and worry. Turn your clock around so that you can't see it during the night.

- **Allow for wind down time before bed**

Schedule at least one hour of relaxing wind-down time before bed. This will prepare your body and mind for rest.



## Sleep Improvement Guidelines

### **Select a standard rising/wake time**

Stick to the same rise time every day regardless of how much sleep you actually get on any given night.

Initially, you may feel more tired. However, a regular wake time will improve sleep efficiency and improve insomnia.



### **Use the bed only for sleeping**

Avoid doing activities that you do when you are awake such as watching TV, eating, studying, working on the computer, or using the phone.

Using the bed for wake activities may unintentionally train yourself to stay awake in bed.

### **Get out of bed when you can't sleep**

Don't stay in bed either at the beginning of the night or in the middle of the night for extended periods of time without being asleep.

If you are in bed for longer than about 20 minutes without being asleep, get out of bed and go to another room. Do a relaxing activity and return to bed when you feel sleepy.

### **Don't worry or plan in bed**

Using the time in bed before you fall asleep to plan the next day, mull over events from the day that passed, or do other thinking can activate you and perpetuate insomnia.

If your mind is racing, get out of bed and go to another room. Return to bed when sleepy.

Try writing down these thoughts an hour or two before bed so that you don't fall into the trap of worrying while in bed.

### **Avoid daytime napping**

Sleeping during the day will decrease your sleep drive at night.

### **Avoid excessive time in bed**

Go to bed when you feel sleepy, however you should not get into bed so early that you find yourself spending more time in bed than you actually need for sleep.

A general guideline is that you should not spend more than 8 hours in bed

*“Sleep is the best meditation”*

*Dalai Lama*

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