

Sleep Tips

Much of sleep hygiene involves calming down the nervous system. Here are some tips for better sleep.

- Keep a regular sleep routine each day.
- Make the bedroom a sanctuary for only sleep and sex. No TV. No computer. No reading.
- Keep the bedroom dark, cool, and comfortable.
- Caffeine is a stimulant. Reduce how much caffeine you have throughout the day with no caffeine after noon. This includes tea, coffee, chocolate, soda pop, and energy drinks.
- Limit water and other fluids to two hours before bed to reduce unwanted trips to the bathroom during the night.
- Restrict your use of nicotine, alcohol, and sleep medications. Like caffeine, nicotine is a stimulant that disrupts sleep. Though alcohol is a sedative that can help you fall asleep, it negatively affects the quality of sleep later in the night and, like water, makes you wake to urinate. Sleeping medications provide short-term relief but can be habit-forming with undesirable side effects like nightmares, pain, and stomach/gastro issues.
- Exercise during the day can help with sleep, but avoid exercising late in the evening as it can interfere with sleep.
- Remove clocks from the room. It's hard to sleep when you are watching the time.
- When it's time to sleep, we don't need information and stimulation. The bright blue screens stimulate the part of our brain designed to keep us awake — no screen time (TV, phone, or computer) at least one hour before bedtime.
- Anxiety and tension aren't good for sleep. Do something relaxing like reading a book (outside the bedroom), practicing deep breathing, or taking a bath before bedtime.
- Limit daytime naps to 20-30 minutes, or don't nap. Napping steals time from night-time sleep.
- Don't lie in bed if you can't sleep. The harder you try to go to sleep, the harder it is. Go to another room and read or do something else to relax.

