

SLEEP HYGIENE: How to Sleep Better

Good sleep is influenced by many factors. Below is a review of things that are known to make sleep worse and better. Consider changes that you can make to improve your sleep.

Things That Make Sleep Worse

- Napping during the day
- Consuming caffeine such as coffee, tea, soda, energy drinks, and even chocolate
 - How many drinks with caffeine do you have each day and what size are they?
 - When do you drink caffeine? It is best to not consume after 2pm
 - Remember that some headache medications contain caffeine
- Consuming alcohol or nicotine within 2 hours of bedtime
- Watching television or using a laptop/tablet in bed/before bedtime
- Eating a heavy meal within 3 hours of sleep
 - Light snack is acceptable, do not want to go to sleep hungry
- Staying in bed even when you can't fall asleep
 - If you are not asleep after 20-30 minutes, get out of bed and do something relaxing until you are ready to sleep (e.g., reading, calming music)

Things That Make Sleep Better

- Exercising and engaging in physical activities regularly
 - It is best not to exercise within 3 hours of bedtime
 - Having a regular routine
 - Go to sleep and wake up around the same time each night
 - Using relaxation techniques (e.g., deep breathing, guided imagery)
 - Take a warm bath or shower 2-3 hours before bedtime
 - Setting aside a scheduled time for 'worry' each day
 - Write down any issues that are bothering or concerning you at least 2 hours before bedtime
 - If you begin to think of these things in bed, remember that you have spent time on them already and that you will leave them behind until tomorrow
 - Making your bedroom comfortable
 - Keep room dark and cool
 - Have extra pillows and/or soothing smells
 - Using the bed only for sleep and sex
 - Waking around the same time each day
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Breaking bad sleep habits and adopting better ones can have a positive impact on the quality of your sleep. **Remember**: Making even small changes can make a big difference!