

10 Tips for a Good Night

1. Create a comfortable sleep environment

- Bed, pillow, sheets, room temperature, humidity, air circulation, darkness and allergies all play a role.
- Noise is an especially critical factor: A noise machine (not T.V.!) can assist with either noise reduction or noise cancellation.
- The Bed: should be for Sleep and Sex ONLY! Let your mind associate the bed with sleeping, relaxing, and pleasure.

2. Don't go to bed stuffed or starving

- Allow at least 2 hours after a meal for bedtime.
- A small snack before bed is OK – a small portion of high, complex-carbohydrate or protein is best (too much sugar can increase energy, hindering sleep).
- Limit fluid intake to minimize nighttime interruptions.

3. Get some exercise

- Fatiguing the body during the day stimulates a reparative response, leading to more restful sleep.
- Do not exercise too close to bedtime – the body needs time to “come down” from the adrenalin/endorphin rush produced by exercise.

4. Put away the alcohol

- Although alcohol is a sedative and can make you feel sleepy – it can severely obstruct/prevent essential sleep cycles that provide the ‘restful’ component during sleep.
- Alcohol also increases frequency and intensity of sleeping and breathing disorders (i.e. sleep apnea, snoring, allergic responses, etc.).

5. Stop smoking

- Sleep is often disrupted by the body's perceived need for nicotine! A craving for nicotine may not be recognizable at night often translating into “late-night munchies.”

6. Go Decaf (At least after 12 Noon)

- For those of us who are “caffeine junkies”, allow at least 5-7 hours to process the last beverage before your planned bedtime.
- Don't be fooled into believing that the ONLY way you can sleep is to have some type of caffeine right before bed. Although you may fall asleep it will likely NOT be restful.

7. Check and monitor all medications

- Be certain to investigate effects of all drugs, including herbal supplements.

8. Leave worries at the door

- Schedule a designated “worry time” to get as stressed out as you would like leaving enough time to relax before sleep.
- Schedule the next day. Providing yourself with a basic structure for the next day can eliminate moment-to-moment worries about things like breakfast, what to wear, kids’ lunch, important meetings, etc.
- Relaxation methods: meditation, breathing exercises, progressive muscle relaxation (PMR), biofeedback; more information provided below.

9. Establish a pre-sleep routine or ritual

- Create and maintain consistent pre-sleep behaviors: bathroom time, prayer, reading, etc. This helps to train, prepare and signal the body for sleep.

10. Do not try to fall asleep

- **Just allow it to happen!**