

Sleep Hygiene

Tips to Improve your Sleep!



For many people whose complaints are:

“I don't sleep well!” or *“It's hard for me to get to sleep!”*

taking sleeping pills may help short-term but frequently they can end up doing more harm than good!

Most authorities on sleep recommend *against* use of sedative drugs by these people for the following reasons:

- Sedatives modify nervous system activity during sleep; for example, they may reduce the normal periods of dreaming. After taking sedatives for a while and then stopping, many people report they have sleep-disrupting dreams, which cause them to wake up feeling tired even after a full night's sleep.
- The human body develops tolerance to sedatives after their repeated use. After a while, you may have to take more and more sedatives to make you feel sleepy.
- A person can become psychologically dependent on sleeping preparations; if you are convinced that's the only way you can get a good night's sleep, you won't be able to go to sleep without a drug.

Non-Drug Aids to Sleep

Before asking your pharmacist or your doctor for something to help you sleep, give the following suggestions a fair try:

1. ***Go to bed and rise at the same time everyday.*** Establishing a schedule helps regulate your body's inner clock. Also try to establish a “sleep routine” by following the same bedtime preparations each night, thereby telling yourself it's bedtime before you get into bed.
2. ***Make sure your sleeping conditions, including your bed, are as comfortable as possible.*** If you are sharing your bed with a snoring, cover-stealing, or restless partner, make separate, temporary sleeping arrangements until you re-establish a satisfactory sleeping pattern.
3. ***Wear loose-fitting nightclothes.*** The more comfortable you are, the better you will sleep.
4. ***Keep your bedroom darkened.*** If street lights shine in your room or if you must sleep during the day, get room-darkening shades or blinds.
5. ***Keep your bedroom as quiet as possible.*** If you can't block outside noise, “cover” it with a familiar inside noise such as the steady hum of a fan or other appliance.
6. ***Avoid taking an alcoholic drink, including beer or wine, before bedtime.*** When alcohol wears off during the night, you may experience periods of wakefulness.
7. ***Avoid too much mental stimulation during the hour or so prior to bedtime.*** Read a “light” novel or

watch a relaxing TV program: don't finish office work or discuss family finances with your spouse, for example.

8. ***Avoid using your bedroom for working or watching television.*** Learn to associate that room with sleep.
9. ***If you can't sleep, get up and pursue some relaxing activity,*** such as reading or knitting, until you feel sleepy; do not lie in bed worrying about getting to sleep.
10. ***Avoid daytime napping,*** which tends to fragment sleep at night.
11. ***Avoid all caffeine-containing beverages after lunch.*** Remember that many soft drinks, as well as coffee and tea, contain caffeine.
12. ***Try to get some exercise each day.*** Regular walks, bicycle rides, or whatever exercise you enjoy may help you sleep better!

Good Sleep Hygiene Tips!

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