



GETTING BETTER SLEEP

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SLEEP HYGIENE

- Do your best to go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day.
- Spend at least 30 minutes per day outside in the sunlight. This helps regulate melatonin.
- Quit smoking and avoid alcohol in the evenings. Both negatively affect sleep.
- Begin to dim lights around your house in the hours before bed. Have a bedtime routine that signals to your brain that sleep is coming.
- Plan for 7.5 to 9 hours of sleep per night. Consider setting an alarm alerting you that it is time to go to bed.
- Limit drinks that contain caffeine like soda and energy drinks.
- If you do drink caffeine, don't drink them after 10:00 am (25% of the caffeine you drink is still in your body 12 hours after you drink it).
- Limit using digital screens at least an hour before bed. The light from digital screens such as phones, laptops, and television makes your brain think it needs to stay awake.
- Set your phone or device to switch to "night mode." This will cause your screen to look more yellow, which is easier on the eyes and better for sleep.
- Keep your room cool (around 67 degrees) and as dark as possible.
- Complete any exercise no more than 2 hours before you plan to go to bed.
- Don't watch TV, work, or do stressful activities in your bedroom if possible. Train your brain to associate your bedroom with sleep, not waking activities.
- Don't take long naps during the day or after 3:00 p.m. A nap of 10-20 minutes is ideal for refreshing the brain and boosting energy.

TROUBLE SLEEPING?

If you can't fall asleep or you wake up in the night and can't fall back asleep, there are some things you can do to help get to sleep:

- An hour or two before bed, take a hot bath (or at least run warm water over your hands, feet, and head). This draws your blood to the surface and extremities and lowers your core body temperature which is critical to falling asleep.
- If your mind is running and you can't stop thinking, write down what you are thinking about on a piece of paper and tell yourself you can work on those problems tomorrow.
- Avoid looking at the clock in the middle of the night. This can create more anxiety.
- Move to another location. Sleep on the couch or in a guest bedroom. This helps your body and brain reset.
- Get out of bed and stretch for a few minutes.
- If you are hungry, eat something. Carbohydrates are best. If you still can't sleep, find a boring book to read.
- Don't do anything stimulating and avoid screens and television.

For more information on sleep, visit [PerfectlyPlaced.org/deepdive/](https://www.PerfectlyPlaced.org/deepdive/)