



Sleep Hygiene

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- **Routine** Practice a relaxing bedtime routine, e.g., quiet time w/parent, bedtime story, and/or quiet use of books/music. Maintain a regular sleep schedule: arise and sleep within the same 30-60 minute time frame every day **INCLUDING WEEKENDS!**
- **Napping** Avoid or limit daytime napping to less than 30 minutes and no later in the day than early afternoon.
- **Exercise** and/or increase activity level during the day. Avoid exercise within 3 hours of bedtime as it is physiologically activating. Regular daily activity keeps the biological clock timed to daylight hours.
- **Lights** Strive for bright light in the morning on awakening but limit exposure to bright light in the evening. It is best to use dimmer, reddish (sunset-red) lights as nightlights or at night. If you can dim the lights on your electronic devices, this may also help. The abrupt drop in lighting induces natural melatonin release. Completely darken the room for sleep. Use darkening shades or blinds to thoroughly block stray light.
- **Nightlight** If necessary, use a red light to minimize disruption of circadian rhythm.
- **Environment** Create a sleep-conducive bedroom environment. Sleep on a comfortable mattress with bed coverings. For young children, pictures of parent(s), quiet music or tape recording of parent's voice may help them to self-soothe.
- **Noise** Quiet is better. If noises are unavoidable, mask with a familiar and steady noise, such as a fan or white noise generator.
- **Stimuli** Avoid stressors, problematic homework, computer or TV just before bedtime.
- **Foods** Avoid large meals within 2 hours of bedtime, but a light carbohydrate snack before bedtime is OK.
- **Natural Sleep Aids** Judicious consumption of warm milk, bananas, peanut butter, oatmeal, turkey or chicken, all high in tryptophan, may help stimulate melatonin, the brain's sleep hormone. A snack may also prevent nighttime hunger.
- **Fluids** Limit fluids within 2 hours of bedtime to limit nocturnal awakenings to void. A full or semi-full bladder may contribute to awakenings.
- **Stimulants** Avoid stimulants like caffeine and nicotine, especially in the evening (or earlier depending on individual sensitivity). Eliminate caffeine 8 hours before bedtime. If on a stimulating medication (e.g., modafanil for narcolepsy, or stimulant for ADHD), talk to your doctor about doses and timing to avoid sleep disruption. If you smoke, do not smoke too close to bedtime and do not smoke during the night if you are awake.
- **Sedatives** Avoid alcohol or other sedatives. There can be rebound wakefulness when these wear off in the middle of the night.
- **Temperature** Take a hot shower or bath 1-2 hours before bedtime and keep the bedroom cool, around 65 degrees.
- **Behavioral Training** Use the bed only for sleep. If you can't sleep, get up and pursue a relaxing activity such as light reading or knitting - avoid TV or other stimulating activities. Once you are tired from the activity, then go back to sleep in your bed.