

# Improve Your Sleep

## 1. Limit screen time

Screen time late into the evening can contribute to difficulty falling and staying asleep. Using screens can keep our brains wired. It is recommended that we disconnect from screens 30 minutes before going to bed.

## 2. Exercise

Tiring our bodies out during the day is a great way to help you fall asleep at night. But don't exercise TOO close to your bedtime or you might be wired.

## 3. Keep a nighttime routine

Having a nightly routine helps our brains and bodies know when it is time for rest. Ease the transition from wake to sleep time with relaxing activities. Stressful activities can secrete the stress hormone cortisol which is associated with increasing alertness.

## 4. Only sleep in your bed

If we get into the habit of doing work while in bed, our brain starts to associate being in bed with having to be alert and thinking instead of winding down to sleep.

## 5. Limit caffeine intake

Caffeine is great when we are tired and need to be awake, but closer to bedtime it can be our enemy. Limit caffeine intake at least 4 hours before bedtime.

## 6. Nap early or not at all

Some people take naps regularly however, for those who struggle to fall asleep or stay asleep, naps are problematic. It's best to keep naps short and before 5pm.

## 7. Set the tone

Make sure your bedroom is conducive to sleeping - dark, cool, quiet, comfortable. If noise is helpful, utilize a fan for "white noise".

## 8. Stick to a sleep schedule

Set aside enough time (7-9) hours for sleep. Go to bed and get up at a similar time each day. This helps the body get into a rhythm. Being consistent reinforces your body's sleep-wake cycle.

### Sleep Needs By Age

Babies/toddlers | 11-17 hours

School-age | 9-11 hours

Teen | 8-10 hours

Adult | 7-9 hours

- Falling asleep on average takes 10-15 minutes
  - 35% of adults do not get enough sleep (7 hours)
    - 20% of teens are getting less than 5 hours of sleep
  - 48% of people in the U.S. report snoring problems
- 30% of adults in the U.S. suffer from insomnia