



12 Tips for Improved Sleep

1. Go to bed and wake up about the same time each day.
2. Avoid heavy meals late in the evening, but don't go to bed hungry.
3. Avoid alcohol within 3 hours of bedtime. Alcohol helps you fall asleep, but robs you of REM and the deeper, more restorative levels of sleep.
4. If you smoke, quit. If you won't quit, avoid nicotine late in the afternoon and evening.
5. Avoid caffeine late in the afternoon and evening. Caffeine's effect reaches its peak 1-4 hours after it is consumed and can exert its stimulant effect for up to 14 hours.
6. exercise regularly. Exercise at any time of the day improves the quality of your sleep. For some, vigorous exercise just before bedtime reduces sleepiness.
7. Establish a relaxing pre-bed routine such as taking a *warm bath, reading or meditating, ½ to 1 hour before bedtime. This allows you to unwind and send neurotransmitter signals to your brain that it is time to sleep.
8. Don't nap after 3:00 pm.
9. Create a sleep-conducive environment that is dark, quiet, cool and comfortable.
10. Sleep on a comfortable mattress or pillow.
11. Use your bedroom only for sleep and sex (releases sleep promoting hormones, prolactin and oxytocin). Keep "sleep stealers" out of the bedroom - avoid watching television, talking on the phone, working on your computer, checking texts or emails etc. in bed.
12. If you don't fall asleep within 30 minutes, get up and do something relaxing like meditation, listening to soothing music or reading a book.