



Sleep Hygiene Handout

Sleep hygiene is a phrase to describe healthy sleeping habits. Quality sleep leads to waking up feeling refreshed, reduces the risk of health conditions, and helps improve mental health.

However, we all struggle with sleep from time-to-time. In these instances, it can be helpful to remind yourself of the right conditions for a restful night's sleep.

Sleep hygiene tips

- **Avoid stimulants:** Limit caffeine during the afternoon and do not consume any caffeinated drinks in the evening. Avoid nicotine altogether, which can make it difficult to sleep.
- **Sleep when tired:** There is little point sitting in bed trying to sleep if you're not tired.
- **Eat mindfully:** Avoid large meals for at least two hours before bed.
- **Be consistent:** For example, go to bed at the same time every day (including weekends).
- **Create a sleeping environment:** Keep the bedroom cool, quiet, and relaxing by using blackout curtains or blinds, decluttering, and removing electronic devices.
- **Keep moving:** Exercise during the day, even if it is a brief walk after dinner.
- **Limit alcohol intake:** Alcohol significantly impacts the quality of sleep and can cause dehydration.
- **Have a sleep routine:** Do a mindfulness activity before trying to sleep, like listening to a meditation, stretching, or journaling.
- **Bath time:** Take a bath one or two hours before bed to help you relax before bed.
- **Bright devices:** Avoid watching TV in your room and make it a sleep-only place. Also, limit use of smartphones one to two hours before bedtime.
- **Monitor your sleep:** You can download a sleep app that evaluates the quality of your sleep, hours, and notifies you of snoring and waking up. This can provide helpful information for your medical provider.
- **Keep a sleep journal:** If your mind wanders or you find yourself ruminating, it can be helpful to take note of the things bothering you.
- **Get up:** Try not to hit snooze when you wake up and be consistent getting straight out of bed when the alarm goes off.
- **Use distractions:** If you find yourself tossing and turning all night or are awake for more than 30 minutes, instead of watching the clock, get out of bed and do something else. Make a cup of chamomile tea or read a book, then try to sleep again when you feel tired.
- **Preparation:** Some people find it helpful to prepare for the next day the night before. For instance, you could get your outfit ready, make sure you've tidied the kitchen, pre-prepared your coffee and breakfast, and have your workout clothes ready to go.
- **Try again:** Restless nights happen. The best you can do is to get up and try again in the evening.
- **Keep your routine:** It can be tempting to avoid commitments or activities throughout the day if you're feeling tired. However, this can reinforce unhelpful sleeping habits.



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Sleep journal

	Hours of sleep	Time to fall asleep	Did you wake during the night?	Time you got up	Did you snooze?	Notes
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

Notes to discuss with my therapist or medical provider: