

Sleep Hygiene Tips

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- a. Wake up at the same time every day, including weekends. Over time, this will improve the body's sleep cycle. Try to go to bed at the same time every night. When you feel sleepy, go to bed.
- b. Develop a bedtime routine that does not involve very stimulating activities. Some calming activities include reading a book (not on an electronic device) or taking a bath. Doing the same thing every night trains your body to expect sleep and go to sleep more easily.
- c. Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation can quiet the mind, relax the body, and promote sleep.
- d. Avoid watching TV, using the computer, or using any electronic device before bedtime as research suggests that these activities may interfere with sleep.
- e. Only use your bedroom for sleeping and sex. Your mind should connect your bed to relaxation, not activities that can interfere with sleep like checking your phone, browsing apps, or paying bills.
- f. Create a sleep environment that is dark, cool, quiet, and comfortable. The air in your room should be in the mid-60s fahrenheit and have enough blankets to keep you warm. Use light-blocking curtains, an eye mask, and ear plugs if necessary.
- g. If you get distracted from sleep by calculating how much time you have left before your alarm goes off, turn the clock away from your view. Develop a calming mantra about having enough time to get a good night's rest and practice relaxation.
- h. Avoid eating and exercising right before bed. If you are so hungry that you are distracted from sleep, eat a very light snack but avoid heavy, sugary, or spicy foods.
- i. However, getting enough exercise and eating right during the day will help regulate your body and make your sleep cycle healthier.
- j. Limit alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine use before bed.
- k. If you wake up to use the bathroom in the middle of the night, consider limiting the amount of liquid you drink about 2 hours before bedtime. If this problem continues even if you stop drinking fluids before bed, talk to your doctor.

- l. If you cannot fall asleep within 15 to 20 minutes, get out of bed and engage in relaxing and/or boring activities to promote sleepiness (this does NOT include reading or watching TV). Meditate, sit quietly on your couch, or pet your dog or cat. Keep the lights off so your brain does not confuse your getting out of bed with starting a new wake cycle.
- m. Don't take naps. If you feel like you need naps, you may need some support to improve your nighttime sleep routine.
- n. Make sure you get some sunlight everyday, preferably in the morning. This signals your brain to develop and maintain healthy circadian rhythm.
- o. If sleep problems persist even after you've tried everything on this list for about two weeks, please talk to your doctor. Some medical conditions create problems with sleep.

Cognitive Behavior Therapy for insomnia (CBTi) is an evidenced-based, non-pharmacological treatment for insomnia that incorporates basic sleep hygiene education, sleep restriction therapy, and stimulus control with the goal of reducing sleep onset latency and encouraging sleep maintenance throughout the sleeping period.

- Although best results can be obtained through work with a specialist in CBTi, SHUTi is a great option for learning CBTi independently: <http://www.myshuti.com/>
- Additionally, the **CBT-I coach** is a mobile application that is designed to help develop good sleep habits and sleep better. The mobile application is available through the android and apple application stores.