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5 Tips for a Better Night's Sleep

Sleep is the cornerstone of whole-person wellness. Without a good night's rest, your body and mind do not have the energy they need to fight off illness, think clearly, and make wise decisions. Exhaustion can also thwart your physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

If you have trouble getting enough sleep, you're not alone. The average adult should get between seven and nine hours of sleep every night—but more than 30% of people say they get less than seven hours per night.¹ While there's no universal secret to being completely rested, some practices can prepare your mind and body to shut down for the night so that you can wake up ready to face each day.

Limit Caffeine Intake

Many people drink a cup of coffee or tea as a morning pick-me-up. The extra boost of caffeine can offer some energy for the day—but relying on caffeine in the afternoon and evening can disturb your sleeping schedule. Caffeinated liquids stimulate the nervous system, which can prevent relaxation. Caffeine stays in the body for several hours, so even drinking a cup of coffee in the early afternoon can disrupt sleep later.

In the evening, consider drinking something with a calming effect, such as herbal tea or warm milk. Additionally, many experts recommend avoiding liquids completely in the hour before bed; this will limit the likelihood of needing to wake up in the middle of the night to use the bathroom.

If you're used to drinking caffeine all day, you might need to cut back gradually—and fight the afternoon energy crash with power walks, plenty of water, or other stimulating activities. Commit to reducing your caffeine intake in the long run so that your evenings can be restful.

Develop a Routine

As tempting as it might be to sleep in late on the weekends, breaking your day-to-day routine can make you feel more tired. If you stay up late at night, sleep in too late, or take long naps during the day, your body will have difficulty establishing a rhythm. In contrast, when you go to bed and wake up around the same time each day, your body will begin to adapt to the pattern—which means you're more likely to feel tired in the evening and wake up naturally in the morning.

To relax your mind and body, adopt some regular habits that will prepare you for sleep. A few recommendations include:

- **Stay away from electronic screens.** The blue light from phones, computers, and tablets can block the production of melatonin, a sleep hormone that your body produces naturally. Try turning off your media devices a couple of hours before bedtime.
- **Take a warm bath.** Before calling it a night, light a few candles and unwind in the bathtub. When you get out, your body temperature will lower—which often leads to feelings of drowsiness
- **Read a book.** If you don't feel tired, reading will give your mind something to do to pass the time until your body is ready to sleep for the night. Keep a book by your bed and read a few chapters every evening as a winding-down practice.
- **Listen to music.** A relaxing playlist might be the perfect thing to put your mind at rest. Choose songs that aren't too loud or fast, and let them lull you to sleep.

When you have a predictable bedtime routine, you'll begin to feel tired instinctively—and you'll wake up feeling rested, instead of surviving on naps and late mornings. Your mind and body love rhythmic patterns, so embrace practices that will help you stay consistent long-term.

Reserve Your Bed for Sleeping

When you use your bed as a lounge chair, dinner table, or workspace, your mind will begin to associate it with being awake, which will make it even harder to fall asleep there at night. Your bed should be the place where your brain relaxes for the evening—not where you go to watch television or work on a project.

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Maximize Comfort

If you're having trouble falling asleep at night, evaluate your surroundings and arrange the ideal environment for rest. Even something as simple as a new pillow can help. Here are a few tips for creating the perfect bedtime atmosphere:

- **Get blackout curtains.** If lights outside your window disrupt your sleep, hang dark curtains that will block out the brightness.
- **Regulate room temperature.** The body rests better in a cool environment because a lower core body temperature incites drowsiness. By keeping your room between 65 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit, you can ensure an optimal setting.
- **Minimize external noise.** Unexpected noises at night—such as a partner's snoring, a dog barking outside, or car horns on the street—can interrupt your sleep pattern and make it difficult for you to fall back to sleep. Consider using a sound machine or fan to drown out the background noise that might wake you.

When you feel comfortable and relaxed, it's easy to go to sleep—so don't be afraid to experiment with new pillows, blankets, or even mattresses to achieve the best bedtime experience possible.

Incorporate Oils & Supplements

Good nutrition is a long-term journey. You must be committed to maintaining a healthy diet for yourself and your family, and that means purchasing high-quality food from reputable places—and supporting your wellness with supplements as necessary.

To support your mind and body, there are plenty of natural supplements and remedies you can incorporate into your routine. You can find many of them at natural health food stores. One of the most common is melatonin—which is a hormone that your body releases naturally in response to reduced light exposure. Unfortunately, because artificial light can interfere with your natural routine, sometimes the body doesn't release a sufficient amount of melatonin. Taking a melatonin supplement can encourage the body and mind to start winding down before bed. A few other common supplements that improve sleep include:

- **L-theanine**, an amino acid that has been shown to improve relaxation and sleep.
- **Magnesium**, which can enhance sleep quality.
- **Valerian root**, which comes from a perennial flowering plant and is often taken by those suffering from insomnia.

Another way to prepare for a good night's rest is to diffuse oils. You can mix several calming scents or you can use them individually. Some of the most effective oils for improving sleep are:

- **Lavender**
- **Vanilla**
- **Rose**
- **Jasmine**

If you don't have a diffuser, you can add oils to your nighttime bath for an immersive experience. When you're deciding which supplements and oils are best for you, take some time to research your options. Everyone responds differently to each product and technique, so it may take time to find the right solution.

Conclusion

Making proactive decisions to support your wellness will put you on the right track to getting a good night's sleep. Sometimes a few small adjustments to your routine are all you need to help your mind and body relax.

If you want to dive deeper into the practices, supplements, and oils that contribute to a restful lifestyle, consider enrolling in one of our comprehensive wellness education programs. You'll get the tools you need to transform your life and improve the world. [Read about our offerings here.](#)

REFERENCES

1. <https://www.sleepassociation.org/about-sleep/sleep-statistics/>



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