

vitaMin

Vital health information in a minute!



1. Make bedtime a habit.

Try to go to bed and get up at a regular time every day, including weekends.

2. Avoid heavy meals before bedtime.

A big meal can keep you awake. However, some foods such as milk can help. Milk contains tryptophan, which helps promote sleep.

3. Regular physical activity, at the right time for you.

Aerobic exercise, even in the morning, can help you fall asleep faster and make your sleep more restful. For some people, exercising late in the day can make it harder to fall asleep, so find the best time for you.

4. Keep your bedroom quiet, dark and comfortable.

Create a calm environment designed for sleeping, with lighting, temperature, humidity and noise level to your preferences. Ideal room temperatures for sleeping are between 68 and 72 degrees.

5. Restrict caffeine and alcohol in the evening.

It takes many hours to eliminate their stimulating effects. And it's not just coffee – avoid less obvious choices such as some sodas and chocolate. Even decaffeinated beverages contain a small amount of caffeine; and so do some medications; and alcohol is not a sedative. It disrupts sleep and makes it more likely that you will awaken during the night.

6. Avoid napping.

Napping can make matters worse if you have a problem falling asleep. If you do nap, keep it short. Try just 15 to 20 minutes about eight hours after you get up in the morning. It may help you make it through the day.

7. Choose a comfortable mattress and pillow and keep pets off the bed.

Find a bed that's comfortable for you. If you share your bed, make sure there's enough room for two. Does your pet sleep with you? This may cause you to awaken during the night, either from allergies or pet movements.

8. Create a relaxing bedtime routine.

Do the same things each night when it's time to wind down. Try a warm bath or shower, reading a book or listening to soothing music. Lowered lights can help ease the transition between wakefulness and sleepiness.

9. Go to bed when you're tired and turn out the lights.

Don't fret over falling asleep. If you don't fall asleep within 15 to 20 minutes, get up and do something else, then go back to bed when you're tired.

10. If you smoke, restrict nicotine.

Nicotine is a stimulant with effects similar to caffeine. Avoid it near bedtime and if you wake up in the middle of the night. Better yet, take steps to quit!



Sources: Mayo Clinic and WebMD®



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