

Trouble Sleeping?

Try These Tips to Create a Routine



Having trouble falling asleep?

Here are a few tips you can try to help you get a better night's sleep.



1. **Develop a routine 30 minutes to 1 hour before bedtime** to wind down and let your brain and body know it's time to rest. Lowering the lights, taking a shower, doing some relaxing stretches or reading a book are all great things to try.

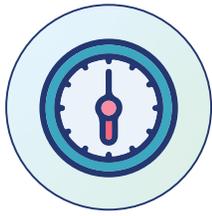


2. **Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day**, even on weekends, holidays and during vacations. If you do this long enough, your body will get into a natural sleep/wake rhythm and it will get easier to fall asleep.



3. **Get out of bed and go to another room, if possible, if you can't fall asleep within 15-20 minutes of getting in bed. This will help you associate your bed with falling asleep quickly!**

- If you are in bed for more than about 15-20 minutes without falling asleep and have not gotten up, you are telling your brain that it's okay to be in bed while awake.
- Do not turn on the lights when you get up. Use a flashlight or booklight.
- Either listen to relaxing music or read something boring (nothing exciting or stimulating).
- Return to bed only when you are sleepy. Repeat these steps if you still can't sleep.



4. **Try to avoid checking the time.** Not checking the time may make it easier to fall back asleep. If you find it hard not to look, hide your phone or alarm clock.



5. **Remove electronic devices from your bedroom or turn them off at least 30 minutes before bedtime.** These devices can keep your brain wired and the light from them can make it hard to fall asleep.



6. **Use your bed only for sleeping and sexual activity** to create a strong association between your bed and these activities. Avoid watching TV, eating, using your phone, playing games, working or any other daytime activities in your bed.



7. **Avoid naps during the day, if possible.** Napping can make it harder to fall asleep at night. If you do nap, limit your sleep to 20-40 minutes and try to do so before 3 p.m.



8. **Try to avoid large meals, caffeine and alcohol intake within 2 hours of your bedtime.** Taking these steps can help to improve your sleep quality.



Making changes to improve your sleep and build a sleep routine will take time and commitment. Remember to be patient with yourself and keep trying, even if you don't notice a difference in your sleep right away. **Start with small changes and continue to work your way up to building healthy sleep habits. You'll be enjoying the benefits before you know it!**