

GOOD SLEEP HABITS:

1. Reduce light, noise and extremes of temperature in the bedroom.
2. Avoid caffeine, nicotine and alcohol before bedtime.
3. Avoid a heavy meal within two hours of bedtime, however, a light snack may help if you are hungry.
4. Regular exercise late in the afternoon or in the early evening may deepen sleep but do not exercise vigorously within three hours of bedtime.
5. In order to achieve relaxation at bedtime, allow about one hour of quiet activity prior to bedtime, such as reading, watching television or listening to music.
6. Develop a bedtime ritual such as reading or listening to relaxing music, clean your teeth etc so that your body knows that you are getting ready to go to sleep.
7. Don't go to bed too early. That is, don't go to bed unless you are feeling sleepy. If you try to go to sleep too early before feeling sleepy you will have difficulty getting to sleep. This may make you feel irritated and frustrated about not feeling sleepy, not falling asleep and anxious about how you will cope the next day.
8. Do not stay in bed if you are awake. If you go to bed when you are feeling tired and sleep but do not fall asleep within about 15-20 minutes (estimated time only, do not use a clock), get out of bed, go to another room and do something mundane until you feel sleepy again. Repeat this procedure until you fall asleep quickly.
9. Get up at the same time in the morning as this will help train your body clock. Do not sleep in on weekends or after a late night.
10. Try not to nap during the day as this tends to reduce your sleepiness at night and results in poorer quality sleep during the night.
11. Do not worry if you can't get to sleep at night because worry and anxiety will delay sleep even more. The harder you try the worse it will be. If you get very little sleep one night you will still function the next day although you may be a little more irritable and tired than usual.