



10 tips for sleep

“In a Nutshell”

If you are having trouble sleeping, have a look at your sleeping habits for a better night's rest.

Try looking at what changes you can make - even small ones. You may not be able to change all the factors that interfere with your sleep, but you can create an environment which can encourage a restful night.

Have a look at the 10 tips below:

- 1. Go to bed and get up at about the same time every day, even on the weekends.**
Sounds boring but sticking to a routine helps get your body ready for sleep.
- 2. Try not to eat or drink large amounts before bedtime.**
Eat a light dinner at least two hours before sleeping. Limit how much you drink before bed. Otherwise you may wake up in the night to visit the bathroom.
- 3. Avoid nicotine, caffeine and alcohol in the evening.**
These are stimulants that can keep you awake. It may seem a good idea to have a drink to help you sleep; although alcohol is often believed to be a sedative, it actually helps to break up the sleep routine.
- 4. Exercise regularly.**
Regular physical activity, especially exercise that gets your heart pumping, may contribute to helping you get to sleep quicker.
- 5. Make your bedroom cool, dark, quiet and comfortable.**
When you are having difficulties in sleeping try to create a bedroom that is conducive to sleep i.e. is the right temperature for you, the room has the correct light.
- 6. Sleep primarily at night.**
Cat napping during the day is a bit like snacking between meals. If you work nights, try to keep your body clock regular by sticking to a routine.
- 7. Make sure you have a comfortable mattress and pillow.**
People have different ideas about what is comfortable. Before you buy a new bed make sure you have tested it first.
- 8. Start a relaxing bedtime routine.**
Do the same things each night to tell your body it is time to sleep. Perhaps a warm bath, reading, working on a jigsaw, listening to gentle music ~ anything relaxing; try not to go to bed 'wound up'.
- 9. Go to bed when you are tired and turn out the lights.**
If you do not fall asleep within 15 to 20 minutes, get up and do something else. Go back to bed when you are tired.
- 10. If sleep is still eluding you, consider visiting your GP.**
They may be able to prescribe sleeping tablets.

Everyone has occasional sleepless nights. But if you have trouble sleeping on a regular or frequent basis, see your doctor. If you feel you may be stressed check with your occupational health department to see if they offer counselling support. They may be able to help you with coping strategies which may help you back on the road to a good night's sleep.

