

Sleep to Feel Well

Tips to Help You Sleep



During the Day

- Keep daytime naps to 20 minutes maximum.
 - Exercise for 20-30 minutes a day at least three times a week. Try not to exercise within four hours of going to bed.
 - Limit caffeine to no more than three 8-ounce cups of coffee a day. Avoid drinking any caffeine after 12:30 p.m.
 - Avoid heavy meals close to bedtime.
 - Limit alcohol and nicotine use.
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Preparing for Bed

- Create a nighttime ritual. A ritual will cue your body, let it know that you will be going to bed soon and allow for natural release of sleep hormones. Nighttime routines can include turning down the lights, gentle stretching, reading a book on the couch, drinking chamomile tea or spraying some lavender on your pillow.
 - Avoid using phones, computers and other electronic devices for at least 30 minutes before bed.
 - Keep your bedroom dark and cool.
 - Reserve your bed for sleep and sex only.
 - Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
 - Add some white noise to your room.
 - Practice guided meditations before bedtime to help naturally induce sleep.
 - Avoid the use of over-the-counter medications to induce sleep.
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If You Are Unable to Fall Asleep or Wake Up in the Night

- Spend no more than 20 minutes tossing and turning if you cannot sleep. Get out of bed and do something calming until you feel tired: read a magazine, make a list of birthday gift ideas, play solitaire, create a grocery shopping list or meal plan, knit or craft, work on creating a photo album or read your kids' books. These activities are often very comforting and positive.
- Do not grab your phone or look at any other screens. Light from screens can affect your ability to return to sleep.
- Try progressive muscle relaxation (this involves tightening and relaxing each muscle group), guided meditation (this involves imagining yourself in certain settings that can help you feel calm or relaxed) or a deep breathing exercise (try breathing in through your nose while counting to four, and slowly breathe out through your mouth while counting to six).
- Do not watch the clock. Make sure there is no clock visible from your bed. Watching the clock and counting the hours of sleep left will only increase anxiety and make it more challenging to sleep.
- If worries keep you awake, try scheduling a 15-minute daytime worry time. During this time, your goal is to sit down and write as many worries that come to mind. If you find yourself worrying when your head hits the pillow, remind yourself you have a scheduled time tomorrow to worry about these things. By scheduling a daily time to worry, you will find yourself having fewer worried thoughts while you are in bed.
- Try these apps with guided meditations and deep breathing exercises to help with sleep:

- [Calm](#)
- [CBT-I Coach](#)
- [Stop, Breathe & Think](#)

