

Sleep Hygiene



What is sleep hygiene?

Sleep hygiene refers to a set of behavioral or environmental practices that can help you get a better night's sleep. Practicing good sleep hygiene can help increase both the quantity and quality of your sleep.

Why is sleep so important?

Getting enough quality sleep is crucial for optimal physical and mental health. During sleep, the body and brain undergo several processes and changes to help with strengthening and restoration. Poor sleep or sleeping habits can impact mood and cognitive functioning (i.e., memory and attention), as well as other psychiatric symptoms.

How much sleep do I need?

The amount of sleep that we need varies by age and may differ based on other health and lifestyle factors. For healthy individuals, the following sleep guidelines are recommended by the National Sleep Foundation:

<u>Newborn</u> (0-3 months) 14-17 hours	<u>Infant</u> (4-11 months) 12-15 hours	<u>Toddler</u> (1-2 years) 11-14 hours	<u>Pre-School</u> (3-5 years) 10-13 hours
<u>School Age</u> (6-13 years) 9-11 hours	<u>Teenager</u> (14-17 years) 8-10 hours	<u>Adult</u> (18-64 years) 7-9 hours	<u>Older Adult</u> (65+ years) 7-8 hours

**Recommendations are based on a two-year study conducted and published by the National Sleep Foundation: www.sleepfoundation.org*

What types of sleep issues can be addressed?

- Behavioral insomnia
- Night wakings
- Bedtime fears/anxiety
- Bedwetting
- Co-sleeping
- Delayed sleep onset
- Difficulties waking
- Night terrors or sleep walking

In some cases, your doctor may consider certain medications to help you fall and stay asleep in addition to recommending good sleep hygiene.

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What are ways to improve sleep hygiene?

- ✓ Make your bedroom environment comfortable and pleasant by keeping the temperature cool and eliminating extra lighting.
- ✓ Establish a consistent and soothing bedtime routine. This can help signal to your brain that it is time to fall asleep each night.
- ✓ Set a consistent sleep and wake time each day to maintain your body's natural circadian rhythm.
- ✓ Avoid "sleeping in" on the weekends or days that you do not have work or school.
- ✓ Eliminate food or drinks that contain caffeine several hours before bedtime.
- ✓ Similarly, do not eat large meals close to bedtime as this can disrupt sleep.
- ✓ Do not use electronics (e.g., cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc.) at least one hour before bedtime as the lights from these screens can signal to your brain to be alert.
- ✓ Exercise regularly in the morning or afternoon, not late evening.
- ✓ Avoid all activities except sleeping in bed so that your brain will associate your bed with sleep.

Who do I contact to find out more?

Referrals for behavioral sleep medicine can be made by physicians, other allied health professionals or from an individual directly.



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