

How to Get a Good Night's Sleep

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1. Avoid Late Nights Snacks

You might think your tummy is rumbling, but it really may be boredom. Especially if it's late at night. When you eat and then lay down, the digestion of the food can cause problems. A late night snack may cause you to get heartburn or acid reflux. Falling asleep may be rough when your insides are burning. Eat an earlier snack or wait for breakfast to eat so you sleep well.

2. Skip Caffeine After Dinner

You ate a big dinner and feel a little sluggish. For a pick me up, you have a cup of coffee or a glass of soda. Wrong! That little bit of caffeine after dinner may keep you awake all night. By the time the pick me up takes effect, it will be close to bedtime. Caffeine not only keeps your body awake, but your mind too. You may have trouble falling asleep, and when you do, it may be restless and full of strange dreams. Skip the caffeine until breakfast to have sweet dreams.

3. Eat a Small Dinner

A small dinner before bedtime can help in more ways than you think. You won't feel sluggish and in need of a pick me up, you won't blow a diet plan and you'll feel hungry for a snack earlier! Smaller meals typically digest easier, preventing any problems from creeping in during dreamtime!

4. Skip Nicotine

Nicotine products can interfere with a good night's sleep. The nicotine in cigarettes and tobacco products is addicting, and if indulged before bedtime, can make the body experience withdrawals right away that interfere with sleep. If you need to use tobacco products, use them an hour or so before you are planning to go to bed. This will give your system adequate time to process the nicotine and withdrawal without harming sleep.

5. Eat an Early Dinner

The sooner you can begin your digestion, the sooner you can have a snack. Early snacks have the proper amount of time needed to digest before laying down, preventing heartburn. Early dinners also burn off more calories, keeping you healthier too!

6. Avoid Greasy Food at Dinner

Does it feel like a huge grease ball is sitting in your stomach? No matter which way you turn, you can't get comfortable. After tossing and turning for hours, you get up to find the proper medicine to make it feel better. If you had skipped the big, late and greasy meal, you would be blissfully into dreamland by now.

7. Try Relaxing Music

A song can soothe the soul. At least for some people. Classical music CD's playing quietly can set the mood to sleep peacefully at night. In addition, studies have shown that playing them while your baby sleeps improves their think patterns. If it can help them so much, it can't hurt you either! If the mood is peaceful and relaxed, and if you wake up during the night, you may fall back to sleep easier since it still remains peaceful and relaxed.

8. Hot Tea or Milk

There is an old wives' tale that says to drink warm milk before bedtime to help you sleep. You can try it, but a cup of decaffeinated tea may taste better. A warm drink warms your insides, but don't drink too much to fill your tummy. That could put you right back to having acid reflux, which hurts!

9. Limit Your Beverages

This goes against a few tips, but only a little. If you need warm tea or milk to fall asleep, drink in moderation. Drinking a gallon of warm milk will fill your bladder up in a few hours. Having to get up and go to the bathroom during the night doesn't make for restful sleep. If you need to sip something, sip in small quantities.

10. Read a Book

This tip needs to be followed with caution. Pick a book where you can read a few pages or chapters each night before bed. The quiet time relaxes your body and mind and focuses on what you are reading.

Your body will fall asleep faster in a relaxed state and remain that way all night. However, if you choose a very interesting or scary book, the effects may reverse! You may stay up too late to finish it or be too scared to sleep!

11. Make Your Room Peaceful

If the budget allows, paint your walls a tranquil color. Pick a color you like, preferably in soft hues to cover the walls. Loud patterns, colored stripes or bright wallpaper may interfere with your relaxation at night.

If you walk into a bedroom decorated the way you like, you can exhale deeply, and fall right into bed. It's your room and the way you like it.

Sleep sound knowing you picked it out.

12. Don't Feed a Sweet Tooth

Sugar right before bedtime can mess up your night of sleep in a variety of ways. 1 – The sugar can hype up your system and make it hard to fall asleep. 2 – Sugar right before bedtime can cause vivid dreams and even nightmares. 3 – The sugar, even after brushing your teeth, can cause tooth decay! So, leave the candy in the jar until morning, after breakfast. Then you can please your sweet tooth when you have enough time to burn it off!

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13. Drift Off to Dreamland

Our dreams, or the subject of our dreams, can ruin a night of sleep. If you have a problem or an argument right before bedtime, try to work it out before going to bed. You may have a hard time falling asleep, staying asleep or even experience bad dreams all night long. Write your problems on a sheet of paper so you can worry about them the next day, make up with a partner or solve your problems before hitting the sack. You'll be glad you did!

14. Use Water

Using water can help you fall asleep and stay asleep. Water fountains are popular since the sound of running water is soothing to many people. The fountains can have a little trickle or a louder waterfall sound. They are all self contained and run with a motor and electricity. However, if you are a person that needs to go to the bathroom every time you hear running water, this option won't be for you.

15. REM Sleep (the sleep stage, not the band)

REM sleep is the deep sleep we fall into for 2-3 hours every night.

REM stands for rapid eye movement, as our eyes move rapidly during this period. For children and babies, REM sleep helps their brains to grow and develop. REM sleep is also when most dreams occur.

Whether we remember them or not, most people dream every night.

16. Buy a Noisemaker

When the house is completely quiet, some people can't sleep at all.

Insert – noise machine. These little machines plug in and offer a variety of sounds to choose from. Some include a babbling brook, ocean waves, white noise and heartbeats. Heartbeats, you say? Yes.

Babies have been shown to sleep with this since it simulates their mother's heartbeat that they listened to for 9 months.

17. Play CD's

If you don't like classic music or even lullabies, play any type of CD during the night. Keep the volume low so as to not bother others in your house. The constant music can help to block out other noises that may be a distraction to you during the night. CD's are a good option because they can be put to repeat and play all night long without you having to get up and mess with them.

18. Get Comfy Sheets

The best feeling in the world is sliding in to bed with crisp, clean sheets. And all sheets are not created equal. Sheets are categorized by thread count. A higher thread count means softer, comfier, more luxurious sheets. Lower thread counts tend to be cheaper, but can also be picky or develop fuzz balls over time. If your sheets remain soft and smooth, not to mention clean, you will sleep better.

19. Have a Support Mattress

One of the easiest ways to ensure you have a good night's sleep is to have a good mattress. Go to a real mattress store and try out many different kinds. There are oodles of things to try: firmness, softness, adjustable, pillow top, etc. Don't be shy in the store and lay on each bed. See what feels the best and buy it! Your good rest needs to start with having the best of the basics.

20. Use Weather Appropriate Pajamas

Now, I know, some people don't wear pajamas. To those of you, who choose to, make sure they fit the season. Even if the AC is on during the summer, you don't want to put the long flannels on. If you feel the need to, then maybe you should adjust the thermostat instead. The same goes for wearing a tank top in the dead of winter. Maybe the heat is set to high if you are that hot at night.

21. Have Fluffy Blankets

Fluffy blankets help you get a better night's sleep for a couple reasons. One, if they are fluffy then their material is an open weave, which allows for breathing. When material breathes, it releases hot air and you won't overheat. A fluffy blanket will also be soft and feel good against your skin. It's hard to sleep well at night if you are constantly being scratched by the blankets.

22. Wear Comfy Pajamas

Silk, satin and other material always looks good, but it may not be the best to wear. Pajamas need to be comfortable at night in order for you to sleep well. Material that is too heavy or doesn't breathe well can harm your good sleep. Choose cotton blends and material that is comfortable on your skin. Avoid anything that scratches, pokes or doesn't fit right. Looking good is not an option over having a great night's sleep.

23. Buy a Good Pillow

Every person has his or her own preference for a pillow style. Lumpy, bumpy, firm or soft – it makes no difference as long as it is comfortable to you. Purchase one with a solid covering so the stuffing doesn't fall out and make a mess. On the other hand, if it doesn't have a good covering, buy an extra pillowcase and double stuff it.

24. Have a Night Light

The occasional potty break in the night is bound to happen. When it does, have a little night light in the hall or bathroom so you have enough light to guide your way. A stubbed toe or bruise to the shin is no fun in the dark, and can turn even the perfect beginnings of a good night's of sleep into a nightmare.

25. Put a Paper and Pencil by Your Bed

Are you one of those people who get the best ideas during the middle of the night? Keep a pen or pencil by your bed with a sheet of paper. If you wake up in the middle of the night and have a great idea, dream or anything important that you want to remember, write it down. Don't lie in bed and try to drill it into your head to remember. Take the worry out, write it down, and fall right back asleep.

26. Relax Exercises Before You Sleep

Even the most relaxed person will have a stressful day or two now and then. If you are feeling stressed out, but it is bedtime, try some relaxation exercises to calm yourself down. Deep breathing, focusing on one object and relaxing the muscles in your body can chase away the stresses so you can sleep peacefully. The relaxation techniques can be done anytime during the day if you need to unwind or take a breather. They will help you unwind at night and fall asleep quickly, too.

27. Exercise During the Day

Keeping fit is important. However, if your exercise regime is scheduled for after dinner every day, it may affect your sleep patterns. The adrenaline after a good workout pumps through your veins, however it can keep you awake too. Tossing and turning in bed until the adrenaline rush wears off can be tiring. Exercise earlier in the day or hold off until morning so your adrenaline has the proper amount of time to relax.

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28. Sit With Your Feet up Before Going to Bed

Propping your feet up before bed not only gives you rest, it improves your circulation. When your circulation is adequate, any swelling that may have occurred during the day goes down also. If the swelling is bad, it can make your legs throb during the night and make for a fitful sleep until the swelling does go down.

29. Set an Alarm Clock

Don't rely on your natural alarm clock to get up in the morning. If you have an important meeting, make sure to set an alarm clock for the appropriate time. When the alarm clock is set, you won't have to worry if you will wake up at the right time or not. An alarm will take the guesswork out and you can rest easy, all night.

30. Keep the Room Dark

Not everyone has the privilege of sleeping at night. Many people work an afternoon or night shift, forcing them to sleep for at least part of the day. If you are one of those people, keeping the room dark will help you get a better sleep. Hang dark colored towels or a blanket over the window. If there isn't a curtain rod, use duct tape to keep it close to the wall and no sun rays peeking in around the corner.

31. Close the Curtains For Privacy

Not only do curtains keep sunrise from waking you up too early, they keep wandering eyes away all night long! When the curtains are shut, you won't need to worry about peeping toms or potential burglars in the night. If they can't see what's in your room, they won't want to break in. If you can feel relaxed about that, then you can sleep easier during the night. If your night of sleep happens to be in a hotel, take a clothespin to keep the curtains shut.

32. Brush Your Teeth

A fresh mouth is a happy mouth. A happy mouth makes for good breath. Good breath and good hygiene habits help you sleep better. Why? How many times have you climbed into bed exhausted, only to open one eye and remember you didn't brush yet? You debate on getting out of your comfy spot or living with the goo feeling on your teeth. Instead of laying there and having a debate before falling asleep, brush them before you are too tired. Keeping your teeth and gums will keep you healthy too!

33. Wash Your Face

Whether you wear makeup or not, clean pores feel good up against that pillow. Scrub your face clean with a little soap and water before retiring. It not only makes you clean, it keep your skin healthy.

34. Go to the Bathroom

You've fallen into a great dream. You're just about to....you get the urge. The urge to go to the bathroom. Remember to go last thing before bedtime, so you won't be bothered in the middle of the night. Being able to sleep a straight night's sleep is much better than an interrupted one.

35. Feed the Pets

In order to get a good night's sleep, you not only need to care for yourself, but other in your household. Before or during your nightly routine, take care of the pets in the family. Give the cat his scoop of food, put a carrot in the guinea pig cage and add a sprinkle of food for the goldfish. Keep everybody from having cravings for a midnight snack – and waking you up in order to get it.

36. Let the Pets Out

Just as you need to keep the pet's bellies full, make sure their bladders are empty too. Let the dog outside right before you crawl under the covers. If he has a late night potty urge, the whining will get you out of bed in a hurry. Avoid the pit call, push them out the door a little early and have a good night's sleep.

37. Make a List of the Next Day's Projects

Do you have nights where you lay your head on the pillow, only to have your mind race? Thinking of what needs to be done in the morning, the phone calls you need to make and the errands you have to run. Hectic lives can make for restless sleep. Make a to do list the night before so you have no worries when you lay your head down. Worry about the list in the morning. Sweet dreams.

38. Lock the Doors

No matter what type of neighborhood you live in, make it a practice to lock your door at night. When the inevitable creaks and squeaks go bump in the night, you don't need to worry if your house is secure. Rest easier knowing the doors are locked tight.

39. Turn Off the Lights

Naps are good during the day, but to get a full sleep, most people do it at night. In the dark. Leave a nightlight on near the bathroom or in the kid's room, but leave your room dark. Turn off all of the lights, shut down any electronic devices that flash lights and crawl under the covers. Don't forget to close the curtains or blinds all of the way so those early morning rays don't peek in.

40. Follow a Routine

Establish a routine and try to follow it everyday. It doesn't have to be any task in any particular order, just stick to it as many days as possible. Following your routine will make your mind settle in to a pattern. When you reach the end of the routine, it's time to sleep a peaceful night's sleep.

41. Make Your Kids Follow a Routine

Just as you need to establish a pattern, get your kids into a routine. When they begin the routine, whether it is reading books, cleaning the toys or brushing their teeth, once they hit the end of it, it's time to go to sleep. When their sleep comes easier, so will yours. When everybody sleeps well at night, you will too.

42. Take Medicine

Remember to take any medications needed before you drift off to dream. Many medicines are three or more times a day. When you split your awake hours up, the last dose of medicine should be taken at bedtime. Don't ever skip your medicine if you are close to drifting off to sleep. The doctor prescribed it for a reason, so make sure to take it!

43. Wake Up a Partner Who Snores

Don't be a martyr. If a bed mate snores, roll them over. If that doesn't help the snoring, wake them up. Eliminate the reasons why they may be snoring so you can have a peaceful night's sleep.

44. Take Them to the Doctor

If you have a partner with a serious snoring problem, get them an appointment with the doctor. Loud and constant snoring can be a serious problem that needs medical attention. Many sleep disorders can be easily corrected when they are found. If they are ignored, it could lead to problems that are more serious.

45. Turn Down the Thermostat

A night sweat can interrupt even the best night of sleep. To avoid a late night heat flash, turn the thermostat down a couple of degrees in the winter. If it's the summer, keep it at a stable temperature that isn't too hot or too cold. Have different thicknesses of blankets to choose from on the bed so you don't have to get up and go to the linen closet if you need a different one.

46. Say a Prayer

Whether you are religious or not, and no matter what religion if you are, send a word of thanks up for your day. If you don't pray, think of your friends or family for a minute. Let the thoughts relax you so you can fall into a long, peaceful sleep.

47. Plan On A Full Night of Sleep

If you visualize yourself getting a full night of rest, you have a better chance of doing so. Just like an athlete visualizes their actions to make them better, you can improve your sleep. Plan to go to bed as early as possible to get a full night of sleep in, especially if you have a big day planned. Don't stay awake for no reason when you can be in bed getting adequate rest!

