

Sleep Hygiene Recommendations:

Good sleep hygiene is an important basic treatment element for sleep disorders regardless of the cause. Sleep hygiene education (outlined below) provides information about lifestyle and environmental factors that may help or hinder sleep. Sleep hygiene provides an essential foundation for other management approaches, but is not a sufficient treatment for insomnia on its own.

- Maintain a regular bedtime and wakeup schedule, even on weekends and days off. This is one of the most important ways to train your body to know when to sleep, and a regular routine helps regulate your body's internal clock.
- Make the last hour before bed a “wind-down” time. Have a light carbohydrate snack (e.g., crackers, bread, cereal) during this time. Don't engage in activities that are stimulating or mentally active (i.e. watching drama/thriller movie, discussion about charged topics such as finances, etc).
- Eat regular meals every day. Regularity in meals will also help to regulate your internal body clock.
- Limit liquid consumption to 8-10 oz in the evening.
- Avoid caffeinated products for several hours before bedtime. Remember even decaffeinated drinks have caffeine in them. It also takes longer to break down caffeine when you get older, so even 1 cup of coffee might linger around for longer.
- Do not consume alcohol too close to bedtime. When alcohol gets metabolized at night, this can actually lead to worsened sleep.
- Make sure your sleeping conditions, including your bed, are comfortable as possible. Wear loose fitting clothes if possible. Your room should be dark and quiet and minimize ambient light and sounds. If you are sharing a bed with a snoring, cover-stealing, or restless partner, make separate, temporary sleeping arrangements until you reestablish a satisfactory sleeping pattern.
- The temperature of your bedroom should be comfortable and on the cool side (around 65-68°F).
- Exercise regularly, but do not engage in activities that raise body temperature (e.g., warm baths, aerobic activity) within 1.5 hours of bedtime.
- If you can't sleep, get up and pursue some relaxing activity, such as reading or knitting, until you feel sleepy, do not lie in bed worrying about getting to sleep.