



CEDAR FOREST WELLNESS

Matthew Brookman M.Ac, L.Ac, Dipl.Om

10 Tips for Sleep Hygiene

By implementing the items on this list to develop better sleep habits you enhance your energy, increase your longevity and reduce illness. There are very few conditions that can not be improved by practicing good sleep hygiene.

1. Make your bedroom a sanctuary to be used only for rest or sex.
2. Keep a regular sleep/wake schedule even on weekends. Resist the urge to snooze - if you notice that your alarm is consistently waking you in the middle of a deep sleep cycle, try setting it for ten minutes earlier or later.
3. Keep the room cool. Ideal sleep temperatures are between 65° and 68° F. Your brain and your body needs to drop your core temperature by about 2-3° F. A colder room will keep you asleep longer. And wear socks or use a hot water bottle — if you have cold feet.
4. In the morning we need to warm up to wake up. Use temperature to help you wake up. If you have a smart thermostat, set the temperature to warm up by 2-3° F degrees at wake up time. You can also drink a glass of warm - or hot water first thing. Peak caffeine takes 45 minutes, so a lot of the waking benefits from coffee come from its temperature.
5. We are a dark deprived society. By dimming 1/2 to 3/4 of lights in your house about 1 hour before you go to bed can help stimulate melatonin. By dimming lights you can send a signal to you body that it's time to settle-in - you can also use candle light instead. Conversely, bright lights and blue light in particular suppress melatonin release.
6. At least 1 hour before bed replace night time screen time with reflection activity that works for you, such as: a warm bath, yoga, breathing exercises, progressive relaxation, meditation, or prayer . Remove all screens and devices from your bedroom. Screen time keeps the body in a constant state of reception. If the only time you're away from your digital device is when you hit the pillow, you are not giving yourself time to reflect on your day.
7. Keep your bedroom as dark as possible by using black-out curtains and covering any glowing/light emitting device like alarm clocks and phones - Turn the clock away from your bed - so you don't become anxious about falling asleep
8. Keep your room quiet. White noise machines can be useful if you live in a noisy environment (marpac.com makes one of the best on the market)
9. Avoid alcohol late at night, or altogether. Alcohol is proven to disrupt sleep homeostasis and hormone production.
10. Cut yourself off from caffeine 8 to 10 hours before bedtime. In most people caffeine stays in the body for at least 8 hours.