

TIPS FOR BETTER SLEEP



Sometimes, sleep just evades us. If you find yourself awake when you'd rather be asleep, try one or more of the tips from the Better Sleep Council to help you get a good night's sleep.

- **Keep regular hours**
Try to go to bed at the same time each night and wake up at the same time each morning, even on weekends.
- **Develop a sleep ritual**
Whether it is to take a hot bath, have a cup of herbal tea, or read a book, doing the same things each night just before bed cues your body to settle down for the night.
- **Exercise regularly**
This can help to relieve tension. But be careful not to exercise too close to bedtime or you may have a hard time falling asleep.
- **Cut down on stimulants**
Consuming stimulants, such as caffeine, in the evening interferes with falling asleep and prevents deep sleep. Instead, have a cup of herbal tea, which is noncaffeinated, before bed.
- **Don't smoke tobacco**
Smokers tend to take longer to fall asleep, awaken more often, and experience disrupted, fragmented sleep.
- **Drink alcohol in moderation**
You may fall asleep faster but drinking alcohol shortly before bedtime interrupts and fragments sleep, leading to poor quality sleep.
- **Unwind early in the evening**
Deal with worries and distractions several hours before going to bed. Make a list of things you need to do tomorrow, so you won't think about them all night. Try relaxation exercises, like slow rhythmic breathing, once in bed.
- **Sleep on a comfortable, supportive mattress and foundation**
It's difficult to get deep, restful sleep on a bed that's too small, too soft, or too hard.
- **Create a restful sleep environment**
A dark, quiet room is more conducive to sleep. Sudden, loud noises or bright lights can disrupt sleep. A room that is too hot or too cold can disturb sleep as well. The ideal bedroom temperature is between 60- and 65-degrees Fahrenheit.
- **Make sleep a priority**
Say "yes" to sleep even when you're tempted to stay up late. You'll feel healthier, refreshed, and ready to take on the day.
- **Restrict the number of activities you do in bed**
Your bed should not become a place for watching TV, eating food, or doing work. It should be a place to sleep and perhaps, if you're not alone, one other activity.