

Tips to Help You Sleep

Handout



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Sleep is an important way for the body to rest and heal itself. Many people experience difficulty falling or staying asleep. You may already know what helps you to sleep well and feel rested. If these habits are not causing you harm then keep using them. You may not be able to control everything related to your sleep but this list of tips may help you sleep BETTER.

Bed/ Sleeping area	Make sure the area where you sleep is as comfortable as possible. Darker is better if you are comfortable with that. If possible make sure you are at a comfortable temperature (not too hot or too cold). Try not to do too many things that stimulate/agitate you while in your sleeping area. Do not watch TV or listen to music unless you find this helps you to fall asleep and stay asleep.
Eating/ drinking	Don't eat large meals just before going to sleep. Avoid eating a lot of sugary foods close to sleep-time. Caffeine and tobacco are stimulants that can keep you from sleeping. Alcohol can make you sleepy but it is likely to wake you up in the night or give you restless sleep.
Tension	If possible, avoid situations that can make you feel tense or unsafe. This can include watching TV shows/movies that involve tense/dangerous situations or tense conversations/arguments with others. Deep breathing, listening to relaxing music, or using a sound machine or app that plays nature sounds can help you relax. <i>(a list of apps is on the back of this sheet)</i> . Restful sleep, free of tension, promotes good health and healing.
Time	Try to keep your sleep time and waking time the same, or as close as possible.
Exercise	Try to avoid active exercise a few hours before bed because it can stimulate you and make it difficult to sleep. It is best to exercise in the morning or late afternoon. If you are physically limited, a cool shower a couple of hours before sleep-time can help the body relax. Stretch and yoga can also be helpful.
Rhythm	If possible, use the same routine before you go to sleep. Napping during the day can make it more difficult to sleep at night.
My Sleep Plan	What two tips would you like to try? 1. 2.

These tips adapted from: Sleeping Better: Your Guide to a Better Night's Sleep Lee, K., Portillo, C., Miramontes, H. School of Nursing University of California, San Francisco



Sleep Aid Apps

SLEEPMAKER RAIN- There are 20 audio clips available that range from gentle to heavy sounds of realistic rainfalls.

This app is available for both Android and iPhone devices. **Price:** Free

aSLEEP – Along with nature, instruments and lullaby tunes, there is a category called “Life” that allows you to listen to helicopters, showers bubbles, and the rhythm of a heart beating. There are also meditation tunes.

This app is available for iPhone devices. **Price:**\$.099

NATURE SOUNDS RELAX AND SLEEP – Along with water sounds, Nature Sounds Relax and Sleep includes sounds of the sea, jungle, snow, birds, and more. Not only can you use the melodies to fall asleep faster, but also to relax anytime throughout the day.

The app is available for Android devices. **Price:** Free

RELAX MELODIES: ORIENTAL MEDITATION – This app focuses on sounds of oriental nature. Close your eyes and listen to traditional Asian music form the Chinese flute, harp, and more. You can mix and match the tunes as well as control the volume of each sound. The app also includes a basic alarm clock and timer.

The app is available for both Android and iPhone devices. **Price:** Free