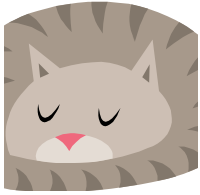


Healthy Sleeping Tips



Stick to a Sleep Schedule: Go to sleep at about the same time each night, and wake up at the same time each morning. Being consistent reinforces your body's sleep-wake cycle.



Limit Daytime Naps: Try not to nap after 4 o'clock in the afternoon. If you do nap, limit the nap to 10-30 minutes.



Pay Attention to What You Eat and Drink: Don't go to bed hungry or stuffed. Nicotine and caffeine should be consumed with caution as well. Stimulants can take hours to wear off, and interfere with sleep schedules. Chocolate contains caffeine so it should be avoided before bed as well.



Create a Bedtime Ritual: Perform relaxing activities before bed. Do the same thing each night to let your body know it is time to wind down. Warm showers, reading a book, or listening to soothing music all work.



Be Wary of Electronics Before Bed: TV, computers, phones, and Ipads stimulate the mind and don't allow for the mind to relax. Research shows that these devices interfere with sleep.



Include Physical Activity in Your Daily Routine: Regular physical activity can promote better sleep, and help you enjoy a deeper sleep. Avoid strenuous exercise immediately before bed because the body might be too energized to fall asleep.



Manage Stress: Avoid doing stimulating, frustrating or anxiety provoking activities in bed or in the bedroom. Create to do lists and delegate your time wisely so you are not constantly thinking about what you have to get done.



Know When to Contact Your Doctor: Nearly everyone has an occasional sleepless night, but if you often have trouble sleeping, contact your doctor.

Adapted from the Mayo clinic article "Sleep tips: 7 Steps to better sleep" and from the Psychology Today article "12 Tips to Sleeping Like a Baby". Created by AmeriCorps HealthCorps member Tony Dempsey.



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