Washington Center for Sleep
sleep better. feel better.

Sleep Hygiene List

Keep a Regular Sleep/Wake Schedule

The body thrives on routine. Waking up around the same time every morning reinforces a regular sleep schedule to the body. This helps your body learn to fall asleep around the same night as well. That means keeping your bedtime and wake time consistent even through the weekend. It may be rough to get into the routine but your sleep will be better in the long term.

Create a Wind Down Routine

Doing slow and relaxing activities that make you feel good are great before bed as they help our minds slow down and prepare our body for sleep.The activities should be enjoyable so you look forward to them every night. If you string all the activities together into a routine it becomes easier to do consistently and removes any thought from asking yourself, "What should I do?" You can try taking a hot shower, stretch for 10 minutes, and read a chapter in a book.

Sleep in Total Darkness

Do you have a night light or have blinking wifi lights in your room? Turn them off! Any lights in your room will impact your sleep. Despite you being asleep, your eyes still pick up light signals while you sleep and send them to the brain. This can cause your brain to be confused about if it really is nighttime or if it is almost morning. Try to sleep in total darkness or wear an eye mask to help block out unwanted light. Blackout curtains can help block outside light.

Keep Your Bed for Sleep and Sex Only

Try to keep your bed for only the essentials: sleep and sex. Spending excess time in your bed working, eating, or watching TV will cause your mind to associate your bed with stress and work, which is the opposite of sleep! Keeping your bed reserved for sleeping and sex helps your mind associate it with feeling good and relaxing.

Keep Your Bedroom Cool

Sleeping in a warm bedroom can be very uncomfortable, especially if you have lots of blankets. During a 24-hour cycle, our body's temperature changes, reaching its peak around 4-6pm (around 11 hours after waking up) and reaches a minimum around 4am, or about 90-120 minutes before waking up. Sleeping in a cool room helps your body feel more comfortable as its own temperature lowers.

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