

How to Get a Good Night's Rest

From the American Academy of Sleep Medicine

Behavior changes are a significant part of getting a better night's rest. To improve your quality of sleep, make the following changes to your lifestyle:

- Go to bed only when you are sleepy.
- Get out of bed if you can't fall asleep after 20 minutes. Leave your bedroom and do something relaxing.
- Use your bed only for sleep, intercourse, and to recover from illness.
- Wake up at the same time every day, including weekends and holidays.
- Avoid napping during the day. If you must nap, sleep for less than one hour and wake up before 3 PM.
- Begin rituals that help you relax before bedtime like reading or taking a warm bath.
- Exercise on a regular basis early in the day.
- Maintain a regular daily schedule to keep your brain's internal clock running smoothly.
- Eat a light snack, but not a big meal, before bedtime.
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, and cigarettes within four hours of bedtime.
- Set aside time in the day to get your worries out.
- Avoid sleeping pills or use them cautiously under the supervision of a doctor.
- Talk to your doctor or a sleep specialist if you have an ongoing problem related to sleep.