

CATCH SOME ZZZs

YOUTH TIPS & TRICKS FOR BETTER SLEEP

1 This is #1 for a reason! **GET UP at the same time every day**, and try to keep your sleep schedule as regular as possible, even on weekends!

2 Allow yourself plenty of time in bed in addition to the recommended hours below:

Age Group		Recommended Hours of Sleep Per Day
Toddler	1–2 years	11–14 hours per 24 hours (including naps) ²
Preschool	3–5 years	10–13 hours per 24 hours (including naps) ²
School Age	6–12 years	9–12 hours per 24 hours ²
Teen	13–18 years	8–10 hours per 24 hours ²
Adult	18–60 years	7 or more hours per night ³
	61–64 years	7–9 hours ¹
	65 years and older	7–8 hours ¹

www.cdc.gov/sleep/about_sleep/how_much_sleep.html

3 Create **mental triggers** before bedtime. Examples: Take a warm shower, read a book, eat a light snack, put on pajamas, figure out what to wear the next day.

4 Wear **non-restrictive clothing to bed**. Anything that tangles around you when turning over in bed, pushes against your bladder, or creates too much heat must GO.



5

Set nighttime **temperature at 60-68 degrees**. This signals the brain that it is time to sleep, and your body must cool down for good sleep.

6

Cold feet can interfere with your ability to fall asleep. **Try warm socks, a hot water bottle or heating pad on your feet, or soak them in warm water** before bedtime.

7

Focus on sleep position

- On your back with neck support is best unless you have sleep apnea.
- On your side is next best (keep spine aligned and neck/arms unkinked, place a pillow between legs for leg-stacking).
- On your belly is worst (it kinks the neck, flattens the spine to create back pain, and restricts your breathing).

8

Change **pillow or mattress plushness**—fat pillows are only good for propping up to read and nothing else! A mattress should support but not cause pain.

9

Once in bed, do a **body inventory**. Focus on one body part at a time from head to toes and relax each one.

- Are the muscles around your eyes tense? Relax them.
- Remove tongue from the roof of your mouth and place it at the bottom of your mouth.
- Open your mouth and close it to relax the jaw.
- Relax your shoulders, arms, etc.
- When you get to your feet, wiggle toes and start all over at your head again.

10

Eat **REAL food and drink lots of water**, but quit a few hours before bedtime.

11

Establish a **Caffeine Curfew**. Limit intake to mornings only and have less. This includes coffee drinks, tea, soda, chocolate, and energy drinks!

12

Talk to your doctor about any current meds that may affect sleep. Sometimes just taking medicine at a different time of day makes a difference.

13

Get outside!!! Get direct sunlight (without looking at the sun) between 6 AM and 8 AM, and start dimming indoor lights a couple hours before bedtime. This is important for setting your “internal clock”. Ask your doctor about taking vitamin D3 if you’re not outside much.

14

Add more activity to your day. Do activities you enjoy, but quit a couple hours before bedtime so your body can cool down. This also helps keep weight down, which contributes to good sleep!

15

Move electronics at least six feet from your bed, and have **no blue light** (or any light) in your room whatsoever. In hours leading up to bedtime, use a blue light filter for iPad or computer, and set cell phone as: *settings > display & brightness > night shift and “more warm”* on a timer for every evening.

16

Turn off all devices so there is no dinging, vibrating, or lighting up happening while you sleep. You can set your cell phone to ring only for selected calls under “Do Not Disturb” setting. Alarms **DO** work in airplane mode.

17

Kick the pets out of bed! If pets or other noises keep you awake, try soft ear plugs. Be sure to insert correctly.

18

If ear plugs are uncomfortable, try a **non-lighted noise machine** or download a white noise app on your phone.

19 Use a **humidifier** next to bed during winter and keep it clean! Dry winter air is a major factor in sinus issues. Use a fan in the summer for air movement.

20 **STRETCH more** throughout the day and especially when you wake up. This pushes blood to your muscles and brain for more energy, better concentration, and help with injury prevention.

21 Monkey Mind refers to the human mind being filled with “drunken monkeys”. They are jumping, chattering, and screeching continually, fighting for your attention as you try to fall asleep. **If Monkey Mind thoughts are keeping you awake, try taking some time in the evening to process your day.** Do homework early, jot to-do notes if it helps, figure out what to wear.

22 Try pleasant scents in your room (**aromatherapy**) like lavender, which is proven to promote relaxation.

23 **Stop watching television** or using the computer at least an hour before going to bed. If you cannot break that habit, at the very least, use a blue light-reducing screen filter and turn down the screen’s brightness.

24 Use your alarm clock the **RIGHT way—no snooze button!** Get out on time. Try different alarms that are more pleasant than an annoying beeping or buzzing. Place the alarm across the room if you are prone to going back to sleep. Do not check the time when you wake up while sleeping. There is no need to look at a clock or a phone!

25 Try keeping a **waking/sleep diary or use an app** to keep track of habits and trends that are working. Compare to your activity levels, food/drink habits, and other factors.



In the future, **never become dependent upon sleeping pills or melatonin supplements.** Even though some packaging may be labeled as “non-habit forming”, don’t believe it! They can also cause dizziness, constipation, next-day drowsiness, or “the hangover effect” of poor balance and coordination. This heightens the risk for accidents the next day.



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