

# Sleep: Tips on getting a good night's sleep

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**Do you wake up feeling refreshed, alert, and ready to meet the challenges of the day? If not, here are some tips to help you get there:**

- Keep regular hours. Try to go to bed and wake up around the same time every day, including weekends.
- Develop a "sleep ritual." If you do the same things before you go to bed each night, it will train your body to get ready for sleep.
- Take some time to relax and unwind before you go to sleep. You may try stretching, relaxation exercises, a hot shower or bath, meditation, or a glass of hot milk help you to relax and prepare for sleep. Avoid activities that may be emotionally upsetting a few hours before you go to bed.
- Avoid caffeine and other stimulants (such as pseudoephedrine, an ingredient in many cough and cold medications) in the evening.
- If you are taking a diuretic (such as furosemide or hydrochlorothiazide), take it in the morning. Diuretics increase urination, and this may keep you up at night if you take them later in the day.
- Avoid drinking alcohol right before bedtime. Alcohol can interrupt sleep, leading to a poor quality of sleep.
- If you smoke, consider quitting. Smokers have more trouble falling asleep, and wake up more often during the night, than non-smokers.
- Make your bedroom "sleep-friendly." Your room should be kept cool, dark, and quiet. If you are bothered by the noises around you, try using a pair of foam earplugs, a fan, or a white noise generator to block out the noise.
- Get a comfortable mattress. If you wake up feeling stiff and sore, or if you aren't sleeping as well as you were a year ago, it may be time for a new mattress. A good mattress should gently support all points of your body and give you enough room to move freely.
- Exercise regularly. This can help relieve stress and make it easier for you to sleep. Don't exercise too close to bedtime if you find this makes it harder for you to sleep.
- Don't feel guilty about going to bed - think of sleep as an investment in your health and productivity.
- Avoid watching TV or reading in bed. Your bed should be reserved for sleep and intimacy.
- If you are having trouble sleeping, get out of bed to read or watch TV. Return to bed when you start to feel tired. Try not to look at the clock.

If you try these tips and still find that you're having trouble sleeping, talk to your doctor.