

## Tips for Sleep Hygiene

1. **Keep a sleep schedule:** going to bed and rising at the same time every day. To help with this setting an alarm to get into bed can be as helpful as one that gets you up in the morning.
2. **Exercise during the day** but no later than 2-3 hours before bedtime. 30 minutes of exercise a day will aide in sleep.
3. **Keep your bedroom a sacred space for sleep:** cool, dark, and gadget free. No clutter. Nothing under the bed. Nothing that will interrupt your sleep.
4. **Avoid large meals** at night.
5. **Avoid alcohol before bed.** It may relax you however, you may wake up in the middle of the night as well.
6. **Avoid caffeine, nicotine, black tea, chocolate before bed** as it interrupts the sleep chemical melatonin that puts you into deep sleep. Caffeine after 1 pm can interrupt sleep benefits. Even if you can get to sleep it robs you of the important REM sleep that heals the brain.
7. **Leave time to unwind before bed.** Start to turn lights down an hour before, eat a light snack if needed and keep fluids to a minimum so you do not interrupt your sleep by getting up in the night.
8. **Take a hot bath before bed or soak feet in really warm water** for about 15 minutes. It will start to get your body into sleep mode faster.
9. **Get out in the sunlight during the day.** It can help regulate sleep patterns.
10. **Can't sleep? Don't lie in bed awake.** Get up and do something relaxing until you feel sleepy. Feeling anxious about not sleeping just makes it harder to get back to sleep.