



Sleep hygiene

Information and tips for a healthy sleep.



Sleep hygiene

Adhering to behaviors that lead to an improvement in sleep is known as sleep hygiene. You can try out which methods suit you best at home.

For people affected by sleep disorders, consistently following a few simple rules can often bring about a significant improvement in sleep quality.

It is also helpful to keep a sleep diary to check compliance with the rules and their effect.

11 rules of sleep hygiene

1

Keep the rhythm!

Find your personal sleep rhythm and try to always go to bed and get up at roughly the same time. This will help your body to learn when it is time to fall asleep and release the sleep hormone melatonin. Whether you need eight hours of sleep or five varies from person to person. However, it is important to only spend as much time in bed as you need to sleep and to move watching TV and reading to another comfortable place if possible.

2

Day and other lights

Daylight at the right time wakes you up, makes you happy and supports your sleep-wake rhythm. In the morning, ideally directly after getting up, it's time to go outside – or enjoy a light shower in front of a daylight lamp with around 10,000 lux. At night, however, you should keep your sleeping environment as dark as possible.

3

Daytime sleep

An afternoon nap is particularly tempting if the night was short and/or bad. However, try to avoid it or only take a short power nap of no more than 20 minutes. Daytime sleep leads to a reduction in sleep pressure, which means you are awake longer in the evening and need more time to fall asleep.

4

Do not look!

Are your thoughts spinning faster and faster hands on the clock are spinning too? Even if it's difficult, try not to look at the clock. Because the more annoyed you get about lying awake, the harder it is to fall asleep. This also applies to looking at your cell phone (see screen time). Instead, get up, find something quiet to do and go back to bed when you feel tired. To calm your thoughts, it can help to write them down in a diary, read a few pages of a book or do yoga exercises before going to sleep.

5

The bedroom as an oasis of well-being

Create a cozy room that invites you to relax and sleep, for example with cosy bed linen, calm colors or relaxing pictures. Also eliminate distracting factors such as brightly lit standby lights from electrical appliances or sources of noise. It is also advisable not to use the bedroom as an office at the same time in order to leave work outside the door, both physically and mentally. A room temperature of approx. 18 degrees and sufficient fresh air also promote good sleep.

6

Move it!

Sufficient exercise and sport during the day can help you sleep better at night, as the body is exhausted. However, the right timing is important. Physical exertion activates the nervous system and leads to the release of stress hormones. The body then needs a few hours to “wind down” again. You should therefore plan workouts at least two to three hours before going to bed.

7

Energy kicks at the right time

Coffee, tea and energy drinks can help us get through various lows during the day. However, not everyone is equally sensitive to caffeine and tein. Depending on the individual, the effects can last for 6 to 14 hours. It can therefore be helpful to avoid them from midday onwards. Nicotine has a similar effect to caffeine and, in combination with the latter, can even have a particularly disruptive effect on sleep..

8

Savoring moments

Large or even greasy meals can delay falling asleep, as the body is busy digesting the food. Therefore, treat yourself to a light dinner or try to enjoy cordon-bleu, pizza or burger at least 3 hours before going to sleep.

However, a small snack before bedtime can even have a beneficial effect. At night, on the other hand, it is better to refrain from eating altogether, as the body will otherwise get used to it and keep craving it. Wine with food should also be consumed two to three hours before sleep. Although alcohol helps you fall asleep faster, the quality of your sleep suffers.

9

Evening rituals

Help your body to prepare for the night with relaxing rituals. Find out what feels good for you – this could be a cup of tea, warm cocoa, a hot bath, relaxation exercises or calm music.

10

Screen time

The blue light from televisions, phones, and tablets acts as a pick-me-up and prevents the production of the sleep hormone melatonin. Even with a blue filter, screens can cause sleep problems. Therefore, try not to expose yourself to them for too long in the two hours before you go to sleep and avoid having a TV in your bedroom.

11

Natural help

There are various herbal remedies that can help you fall asleep and stay asleep. These include valerian root, for example, which can be taken in the form of drops or tablets. You can also try various teas, for example with hops, lemon balm, camomile or lavender. The latter can also be used as an essential oil. If you have problems falling asleep as well as restlessness, orange blossom tea can help.

Tip from the editors

Relaxation is a fundamental prerequisite for healthy sleep. Various relaxation techniques such as progressive muscle relaxation, autogenic training, yoga nidra or breathing techniques help to calm the mind and, when used regularly, ensure better sleep, more peace, and serenity as well as a strengthened immune system. You can find a simple and calming breathing technique on the last page of the brochure.

Disease as the cause

Poor sleep can be improved in many cases with good sleep hygiene.

However, there are some cases in which the sleep disorder is due to a disease such as sleep apnea, heart rhythm disorders or high blood pressure.

Many medications can also work against a good nights sleep or lead to drowsiness.



Further information on sleep apnea: <https://en.hul.de/service/downloads/>

On our website you will find everything
Things to know about sleep apnea:



Brochure for download:
"I need my healthy sleep"



With 4-7-8 into the land of dreams.

This simple breathing technique can help you fall asleep better and faster.
Try it out!

Instructions:

- Breathe in through your nose and count to 4 internally
- Hold your breath and count to 7 internally
- Exhale the entire breath through your mouth noisily while counting to 8 internally
- Repeat the procedure 4 times

Tip: If the breathing frequencies are too long for you, you can also halve them.
 Example: Inhale for 2 seconds, hold your breath for 3-4 seconds and exhale for 4 seconds.

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