

Principles and Tips for Good Sleep

Sleep Diary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Monitor the amount of sleep during day and night
Regular sleep-wake schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Go to bed at the same time each night• Wake up at the same time each morning• Avoid naps during the day
Sleep-promoting nightly ritual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan a relaxing, soothing routine for your last hour of wakefulness (if the time for “lights out” is 9:45pm, start winding down by 8:45pm)• Your last hour could include the following: dimming the lights; screening phone calls for urgent calls; showering, bathing, and doing other usual hygiene routines; changing into your bed clothes; reading relaxing or non-stimulating material; limiting yourself to read only up to your “lights out” time; listening to soothing music or other “white noise”
Avoid stressful or other mentally stimulating activities before bedtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Address tomorrow’s activities, concerns, or distractions earlier in the day• Unless absolutely necessary, postpone anxiety-provoking conversations that require you to make important decisions, or may cause more conflicts, to a time when you are more alert, rested, and much more likely to make a sound decision
Do not lie in bed “wide awake”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trying to will yourself to sleep when you’re not sleepy will make you more frustrated, not sleepier• Instead, get out of bed, and engage in mentally and physically non-stimulating activities that will relax, soothe, and perhaps bore you
Avoid stimulants, alcohol, and heavy meals at bedtime	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have your last caffeine- and alcohol-containing food or drink at least 4 hours before you go to bed• Do not smoke within an hour of bedtime, and refrain from smoking if you wake up in the middle of the night• Do not eat a heavy meal within 2 hours of going to bed
Exercise	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Light, aerobic exercise for even 20-30 minutes earlier in the day promotes deep sleep• Avoid exercising within 2 hours of bedtime, since it could actually be activating, and interfere with sleep
Comfortable environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sleep is promoted by darkness, quiet or soothing noises, and a relatively cool temperature (<68° F)

