

# **Sleep: An Evolutionary Imperative. SLEEP HYGIENE TIPS**

## **#1 RESET YOUR BIOLOGICAL CLOCK**

As soon as you get up in the morning, go outside and turn your face to the sun for 15 minutes.

## **SLEEP ONLY WHEN SLEEPY**

This reduces the time you're awake in bed. If you can't fall asleep within 20 minutes, get up and do something boring until you feel sleepy. Avoid bright light during this time. **DON'T TAKE NAPS**

This will help make you tired at bedtime. If you must nap, sleep for less than an hour before 3pm.

## **GO TO BED ON TIME**

Get up and go to bed the same time every day, even on weekends. It's easier to sleep when you have a regular sleep cycle.

## **TIME YOUR EXERCISE**

Regular exercise can help improve your sleep, but don't do so too close to bedtime (at least 4 hours prior).

## **DEVELOP SLEEP RITUALS**

It is important to give your body cues that it is time to sleep, such as listening to relaxing music, drinking herbal tea, or meditating.

## **ONLY USE YOUR BED FOR SLEEPING**

Refrain from using your bed to watch TV, pay bills, do work, or read.

## **AVOID CAFFEINE, NICOTINE, AND ALCOHOL**

Caffeine and nicotine are stimulants and alcohol can cause poor, fragmented sleep. Avoid them all for at least 4 hours before bedtime.

## **HAVE A LIGHT SNACK BEFORE BED**

Sleeping on too empty or too full a stomach can interfere with sleep, but eat your last heavy meal at least 3 hours before bedtime.

## **TAKE A HOT BATH**

While a hot bath 90 minutes before bedtime will initially raise your body temperature, the subsequent drop in temperature afterwards may make you feel sleepy.

## **COOL YOUR ROOM**

Sleeping in too hot an environment can be difficult. A cooler room, at a sleep-promoting 65 degrees with enough blankets to stay warm, is recommended.

## **KEEP THINGS DARK AND QUIET**

Blackout shades or an eye mask can help block out light and earplugs or a white noise machine can help reduce noise.