

Wellness Tip: Healthy Sleep

Healthy sleep habits can make a big difference in your quality of life. Sleep is a vital, often neglected, component of every person's overall health and well-being. Sleep is important because it enables the body to repair and be fit and ready for another day. Getting adequate rest may also help prevent excess weight gain, heart disease, and increased illness duration. During this time of social distancing, balancing multiple roles at home, and potentially increased anxiety – sleep is important as ever!

Try to keep the following sleep practices on a consistent basis:

1. **Stick to a sleep schedule of the same bedtime and wake up time, even on the weekends.**
2. **Practice a relaxing bedtime ritual-** such as staying away from bright lights, listening to calming noise or music.
3. **If you have trouble sleeping, avoid naps, especially in the afternoon.**
4. **Exercise daily.** Vigorous exercise is best, but even light exercise is better than no activity.
5. **Evaluate your room.** Design your sleep environment to establish the conditions you need for sleep. Your bedroom should be cool – between 60 and 67 degrees.
6. **Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillows.** Make sure your mattress and pillows are comfortable and supportive.
7. **Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, and heavy meals in the evening.** Alcohol, cigarettes and caffeine can disrupt sleep. Eating big or spicy meals can cause discomfort from indigestion that can make it hard to sleep.
8. **Wind down.** Your body needs time to shift into sleep mode, so spend the last hour before bed doing a calming activity such as reading.
9. **If you can't sleep, go into another room and do something relaxing until you feel tired.** It is best to take work materials, computers and televisions out of the sleeping environment.
10. **If you're still having trouble sleeping,** don't hesitate to speak with your doctor or to find a sleep professional.

A Few Reminders:

- Check out the [Inspirations and Relax 360 apps](#) on ShareCare - there are great sleep sounds that you can help ease you into sleep.
- [A to Z Habits for Better Sleep](#), which has some great healthy tips!
- Visit the following websites to find even more information:
 - [Sleep Foundation](#)
 - [Harvard Medical School](#)
 - [HealthLine](#)