

## *Sleep Hygiene*

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What is sleep hygiene?

- Various practices that promote a normal, quality nighttime sleep and daytime alertness.

Tips for a good nighttime sleep

- Go to bed at the same time each night and awake at the same time each morning.
- Create a relaxing bedtime routine that you practice daily.
- Go to sleep when you are actually tired. If you are not asleep within 20mins, get up, go to another room, and practice a relaxing activity. This prevents the frustration of not being able to fall asleep.
- Don't stare at the clock. Turn it away from you.
- Avoid napping during the day.
- Avoid stimulating substances, such as caffeine, nicotine, or alcohol in the latter part of the day. Try stopping at noon.
- Exercise is important to promote good sleep. Vigorous exercise should be done in the first half of the day, and more relaxing exercise (ie yoga, tai chi) can be done before bed.
- Avoid eating right before you sleep. Avoid fluids before bed.
- Avoid screen time (phones, computers, TV) before bed. Choose a book instead.
- Get outside during the day. Exposure to natural light is important for regulating the sleep-wake cycle.
- Create a pleasant and relaxing sleep environment (dark, quiet, comfortable).
- Your bed should only be used for sleep and intimacy.

Getting a handle on your sleep

- For 2 weeks, create a sleep journal.
- Keep track of the time you went to bed each night and your wake-up time in the morning.
- Track nighttime awakenings.
- Track the timing of major meals and snacks, stimulants (alcohol, caffeine, nicotine), exercise.
- Make note of your level of fatigue throughout the day.

### **References and more reading:**

Canadian Sleep Society: <http://css-scs.ca/>

National Sleep Foundation: [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org)

Division of Sleep Medicine at Harvard Medical School: <http://healthysleep.med.harvard.edu/>

## Example of a Sleep Journal (from the Canadian Sleep Society)

	Midnight												Noon												
<b>Day 1</b>																									
	Comments:																								
<b>Day 2</b>																									
	Comments:																								
<b>Day 3</b>																									
	Comments:																								
<b>Day 4</b>																									
	Comments:																								
<b>Day 5</b>																									
	Comments:																								
<b>Day 6</b>																									
	Comments:																								
<b>Day 7</b>																									
	Comments:																								
	6	8	10	12	2	4	6	8	10	12	2	4	6	8	10	12	2	4	6	8	10	12	2	4	6

Activities key: M = meals, C = caffeine, A = alcohol, X = exercise, S = snack, T = toilet during night  
 Note: ↓ indicates bedtime and ↑ time out of bed; the solid lines represent time asleep