

Practices conducive to good sleep

- Go to bed only when you are drowsy.
- If you are unable to fall asleep or stay asleep, leave your bedroom and engage in a quiet activity elsewhere. Do not permit yourself to fall asleep outside the bedroom. Return to bed when-and only when-you are sleepy. Repeat this process as often as necessary throughout the night.
- Maintain a regular wake-up time, even on days off work and on weekends.
- Use your bedroom only for sleep and intimacy.
- Avoid napping during the daytime. If daytime sleepiness becomes overwhelming, limit nap time to a single nap of less than one hour, no later than 3 p.m.
- Distract your mind and avoid watching the clock. Avoid lying in bed frustrated and unable to sleep. You might try reading, watching a videotape or listening to books on tape. It may be necessary to go into another room to do these things.
- Avoid caffeine within four to six hours of bedtime.
- Avoid the use of nicotine close to bedtime or during the night.
- Do not drink alcoholic beverages within four to six hours of bedtime.
- While a light snack before bedtime can help promote sound sleep, avoid large meals.
- Obtain regular exercise, but avoid strenuous exercise within four hours of bedtime.
- Minimize light, noise, and extremes in temperature in the bedroom.
- Ear plugs and a sleep mask can help with noise and light. A noise generator can help as well, and be as simple as a fan. Leaving the television and radio on have been shown to actually increase arousals and awakenings during sleep.