

Soul Essence

Fact Sheet – Getting a Good Night's Sleep

Getting a Good Night's Sleep Tips.

Your daytime habits and lifestyle choices maybe the reason for you bad night's sleep.

Try the tips below.

Your natural sleep/wake cycle:

1. Go to bed and get up at the same time each day. This sets your body's internal clock. If you are getting the same amount of sleep at the same time each night, you should wake up naturally without an alarm clock.
2. Do not sleep in on weekends. The more your daily routines differ, the more you will feel tired. Make up for a late night by having a power nap of 15 to 20 minutes late morning or early afternoon where possible.
3. Feel drowsy after dinner, get up and do something, wash up, call a friend, get things ready for the next day.

Exposure to Light

1. Melatonin is the hormone that controls your sleep cycle. Your brain produces this when it is dark. With modern life our production of melatonin is altered. Make sure you have blinds or curtains to block out the light. Cover your phone and set to silent so you will not be disturbed by it.
2. In the morning get into the bright sunlight, have breakfast near a window where the sun shines in. Take work breaks, exercise, outside in the sunlight.
3. During the day keep blinds and curtains open to help natural light into your home or workspace. During the winter short days, a light therapy box can be useful.
4. Avoid TV, laptop, and phone screens during the two hours before bedtime. The blue light emitted by these are very disruptive to your sleep pattern, by supressing melatonin production.
5. Watching TV late at night just before bed stimulates the brain, this does not help you relax. Try relaxing music, or meditation.
6. If your bedroom is not totally dark, try using a mask to sleep. When getting up in the night avoid if possible, putting the main light on, use a torch or have a dim light in the hall.

Your Diet and eating habits

1. Nicotine and caffeine are stimulants, caffeine particularly can cause sleep problems in some people ten to twelve hours after drinking.
2. Avoid eating big meals late in the evening, particularly spicy or acidic foods, which may cause heartburn.
3. Alcohol may seem as though it relaxes you, however, it will interfere with your nights sleep. Alcohol is best avoided if you want a good night's sleep.
4. Reducing the amount of fluids you drink before bed, will avoid trips to the toilet at night.
5. Reducing sugar and refined carbs (white bread, pasta, cakes, and sweets) before bedtime, will also help you sleep. These often trigger a wakeful night. If you need a snack try an banana or a drink of milk.

Relaxing and clearing your thoughts

1. Is stress and worry stopping you sleeping. Try having a relaxing ritual before bed, this could be a warm bath, listening to relaxing music. AVOID going on social media, checking your emails etc on your phone. This stimulates the brain; you will therefore not find it easy to drop off to sleep.
2. Practise deep breathing once you are in bed or listen to a meditation.
3. You can also do a body scan meditation to help you relax before bed.

Bedroom Environment

1. Keep your bedroom for sleeping and sex. Not for working or watching TV. Once your brain associates the room with sleep it is so much easier to fall asleep.
2. Keep it cool and quiet, these will also help you stay asleep.
3. Comfort, have you the correct mattress and pillows. Can you turn easily without getting tangled in the duvet/sheets.

Getting back to sleep.

We all wake briefly at night but should fall straight back to sleep.

1. If you wake up and cannot get back to sleep, try concentrating on your breathing, and repeating a simple word or noise like “the” or “Ahh”.
2. Keep your aim at relaxation and not sleep. Try visualising each muscle group and feel them relax, by relaxing your body it is still rejuvenating.
3. If you wake up anxious, write your thoughts and worries in a notebook and tell yourself these will be easier to deal with the next day.
4. Reciting positive affirmations can also help some people. “I am ready for sleep” or “I am relaxed”

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