

10 Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

If you are one of the growing number of people with sleep problems, here are 10 good sleep habits to get into:

1. Go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day. The body likes predictability.
2. Turn off the computer two hours before bedtime, and don't watch TV in bed.
3. If you suspect money or relationship issues are keeping you up at night, consider counseling or confiding in your pastor to help alleviate stress.
4. Use a book, not a tablet, for reading. Studies show that backlit screens, like those on iPad and other tablets, can disrupt your natural body clock.
5. Don't eat or drink anything that contains caffeine after noon. This includes coffee, of course, but other drinks and foods can contain this stimulant as well, including tea, chocolate, energy drinks and some sodas.
6. Darken the room completely.
7. Don't go to sleep on a full stomach.
8. Get regular exercise; it promotes sleep.
9. Avoid alcohol at night. Even if you think it helps you get to sleep, drinking alcohol increases the odds of awakening.
10. Follow a nighttime ritual. Brush and floss your teeth, turn down the bed, take a hot bath or listen to relaxing music. Establish a pleasurable routine and stick to it.

Even though you may never have thought about the necessity of

getting a full night's sleep, when it comes to protecting your health, the evidence is clear that fulfilling your daily sleep requirement is as important as the other steps you take to protect your heart. So if you are still having sleep problems, don't cover them up with a sleeping pill. Get to the root of the problem and get the good night's sleep you deserve.

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