

10 Tried-and-True Tips for When You Can't Fall Asleep

We all know how important sleep is for both our physical and mental health. Sleep deprivation is detrimental to our entire well-being and creates stress in our daily lives. It only takes one night of poor sleep to make you so thankful for the sleep you normally get!

Lack of sleep not only makes us cranky, and out of sorts but missing out on the recommended seven to nine hours of shut-eye does more than affect your mood. The long-term effects of sleep deprivation are real. Sleep deprivation drains you mentally and emotionally while putting your body at an increased risk for all kinds of health problems.

Did you also know that a lack of sleep can also lead to weight gain and a weakened immune system? Sleep affects the levels of two hormones, leptin and ghrelin, which control feelings of hunger and fullness.

Leptin tells your brain when you've had enough to eat. Without the right amount of rest, your brain reduces leptin and raises ghrelin, which is an appetite stimulant. The fluctuation of these hormones can contribute to nighttime snacking or overeating during dinner meals. A lack of sleep also makes it difficult to become motivated to exercise which also contributes to weight gain.

Being sleep-deprived also signals your body to release higher levels of insulin after you eat, and insulin is what controls your blood sugar level. Higher insulin levels prompt the body to store fat, which increases your risk for type 2 diabetes.

So getting enough sleep each night is pretty important for the body to function properly, but if you've been having trouble sleeping lately or having trouble staying asleep, here is a

great list from Signature MD with some tips that we hope will help you increase your nighttime Zzzzz.

1. Maintain a consistent daily schedule.
2. Reduce caffeine intake.
3. Turn off the computer or television.
4. Don't go to bed on a full stomach.
5. Don't go to bed on an empty stomach
6. Engage in regular exercise.
7. Limit beverage consumption before bed.
8. Keep your room dark and quiet.
9. Invest in a comfortable mattress, pillow and bedding.
10. Go to sleep and wake up using your internal alarm clock.

To take it a step further, create a journal with these tips written down and spend some time assessing which ones are keeping you from getting adequate rest and put a plan in place to help you tackle each one.

For example, if staying up too late watching TV or surfing the internet from a device is a struggle, set an alarm on your phone to prompt you that it's time to turn everything off so you can wind down, free of distractions.

Were these tips helpful? Leave us a comment; we would love to hear from you! Are you looking for more tips to help you live a well-balanced, healthy lifestyle? Join us over on our Facebook page, where content and conversation are happening daily! {eo}

Michelle Spadafora started *Faithful Workouts* in 2009 after 22 years in the fitness industry. She created *Faithful Workouts* to be a place where you can come and strengthen your relationship with God while you strengthen your body and mind, a place where you can find great workouts for all fitness levels, receive simple, practical nutrition information and connect with a real community who knows that the journey to better health is more about encouraging each other and less

about being perfect.

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