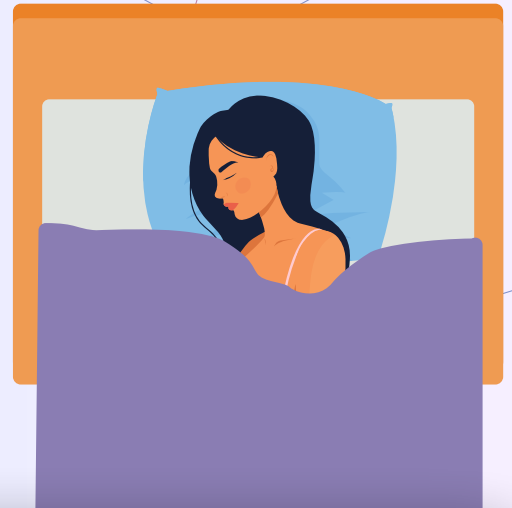# Adopting good sleep hygiene

Everyone needs enough sleep to function at their best. This is because many biological processes happen when we sleep that are essential for our overall health.

'Sleep hygiene' refers to habits and routines that play a crucial role in helping us to achieve a good night's sleep every night.

Adopt good daily habits

Establish a consistent sleep schedule with regular waking and sleeping times

Aim to get at least 30 minutes exposure to sunlight every day to regulate your body's circadian rhythms[1]

Exercise regularly, but avoid it just before bedtime when your body is unwinding

Quit smoking – even just reducing the number of cigarettes per day may help to improve sleep quality[2]

Manage your caffeine intake – caffeine is a stimulant, so avoid it close to bedtime

Reduce alcohol consumption – sleep can be disrupted when the effects of alcohol wear off

Avoid afternoon naps – they can make it harder to get to sleep at bedtime

Establish a bedtime routine

Aim to have your last meal at least two hours before bedtime, so your body isn't digesting food while you're trying to fall sleep

Limit mental and physical activities, including use of electronic devices, at least 30 minutes before bed. Try gentle stretching, light reading or listening to calming music instead

Reduce or stop using sleeping pills, which can aggravate sleep apnea[3]

Create a calming bedroom environment

Set up your bedroom so that it is quiet, dark, and a comfortable temperature

Consider investing in a comfortable mattress, pillow and quality bedding

Create a mental link between your bedroom and sleep by only going to bed when you're tired, and limiting bedroom activities to sleep and sex

If you wake up during the night and have trouble getting back to sleep, get up and do something that helps you feel relaxed, until you feel sleepy again

Remember, the key to good sleep hygiene is consistency. Test new habits and be consistent.

1. Peters, B. (2020, July 23). Get Morning Sunlight and You'll Sleep Better. Very Well Health. https://www.verywellhealth.com/morning-sunlight-exposure-3973908# **2.** Deleanu OC et al. Influence of smoking on sleep and obstructive sleep apnea syndrome. Pneumologia (Bucharest, Romania) vol. 65,1 (2016): 28-35. **3.** Jullian-Desayes I et al. Impact of concomitant medications on obstructive sleep apnoea. Br J Clin Pharmacol. 2017 Apr;83(4):688-708

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