



## SLEEP HYGIENE

### WHAT IS SLEEP HYGIENE?

Sleep hygiene means having good sleep habits.

### WHY IS SLEEP IMPORTANT?

Sleep keeps our brain working well and helps our mood, energy, cognition (ability to think/learn/memory). Sleep is important for our overall health and well-being. The recommended amount of sleep for adults is 7-8 hours per day.



### TIPS

- ✓ Avoid caffeine 4-6 hours prior to sleep. Caffeine can be found in coffee, tea, and even chocolate! It is a stimulant, which interferes with your body's ability to sleep.
- ✓ Avoid alcohol 4-6 hours prior to sleep. Although many people believe alcohol helps them to fall asleep, it actually disrupts the **quality** of your sleep.
- ✓ Avoid napping during the day. This helps to make sure that you are tired when bedtime comes around!
- ✓ Keep your bedroom only for sleeping and sex. This helps your brain associate your bedroom with sleep. Avoid watching TV, reading, eating, or other activities in your bedroom.
- ✓ Do not check what time it is! Looking at the clock can increase stressful thoughts such as "It's so late, I have only a few hours left to sleep," which can keep you up. Turn your clock around and avoid checking it.

### ENVIRONMENTAL MODIFICATIONS

**1. LIGHT** - Exposure to light (sunlight or artificial indoor light) during the daytime and exposure to darkness at nighttime maintains our body's circadian rhythm.

#### What is circadian rhythm?

It is your "24-hour internal clock" inside of your brain that controls your sleep/wake cycle. Your internal clock/brain will send messages to your body telling you when to feel awake or sleepy.

#### WHAT CAN I DO?

- ✓ Go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day. Even on weekends! Your internal clock works best when you have regular sleep habits.
- ✓ Avoid screen time for approximately 2 hours before bedtime.
- ✓ Get enough light during the day and avoid bright lights in the evening.

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**2. SOUND** - We cannot turn off our hearing. Even when we are asleep, our brain can hear the noises around us. For example, people around us, pets, TV.

**WHAT CAN I DO?**

- ✓ Wear ear plugs.
- ✓ Turn off the TV.
- ✓ Use white noise. E.g. Keeping a fan on at night. This can actually help sleep!
- ✓ Listen to soothing music before bed to relax.
- ✓ Download the app "Sound Meter." You can check the sound in your environment before sleeping. Decibels (dB) are a measure of sound. Your environment should be below 30 (dB).

**3. TEMPERATURE** - Your body naturally will start to cool down when it gets ready to sleep. Cooler core body temperatures help you to fall asleep.

**WHAT CAN I DO?**

- ✓ Ideally, the bedroom temperature should be between 15 to 19 degrees Celsius.
- ✓ Take a warm shower/bath before bed. Your body will cool down naturally after.
- ✓ Exercise during the daytime! However, avoid exercise 2 hours before bedtime because it can take a while to cool down.

**4. BEDDING** - There are options such as temperature regulating bedding, heavier bedding, and orthopedic pillows to help with different sleep concerns.

**WHAT CAN I DO?**

- ✓ Ask your occupational therapist for more information about bedding options!



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