

Sleeping Tips for a Good Night's Rest

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This document is a summary of the tips on how to get a good amount of restful and replenishing sleep. As long as credit is given as listed above, the contents of this document may be freely shared on websites, blogs, and in publications. Credit constitutes the copyright symbol along with the author's name, title and website address as listed above.

I have been a great sleeper all of my life. Through easy times and difficult times one thing I can count on is good restful sleep. I know the value of sleep, and I don't skimp on my sleep. The only time your body can go to work on repairing itself from health issues and problems is while you are sleeping. I cannot emphasize enough the value of getting the right amount of sleep for you and a high quality, restful sleep. I am not a medical practitioner in any capacity, so this does not constitute medical advice. Please see your doctor for medical advice. This question comes up when I speak publicly on health and wellness, and people have let me know that my suggestions, contained herein, actually work well.

1. Rule out medical conditions, most notably celiac disease & sleep apnea

If you are not sleeping well, see your primary care physician to rule out any medical conditions. This is very important. Two conditions to be sure to rule out are celiac disease and sleep apnea.

2. Cut out caffeine after 1:00 p.m.

Many years ago, I had trouble getting my normal restful and deep sleep and I began to suspect that it might be caffeine was keeping me up at night. I took caffeine completely out of my diet and in return got massive headaches, which I later found out, is not an uncommon symptom for caffeine withdrawal. I eventually figured out that I could tolerate caffeine in the morning as long as it was not late in the day. Today I rarely ever drink caffeine, instead opting for decaffeinated coffee. Most teas, by the way do contain caffeine, unless they specifically state that they are decaffeinated. If you are having any sleeping issues I would strongly urge you to consider this suggestion right after item number one above.

3. Clear your head before bed

If you have trouble sleeping do yourself a favor and write down a list of things to do before you go to bed. Also write down anything that is on your mind or troubling you. It is essential that you go to bed not thinking about all the things you have to do. Easier said than done? Not really. This is a matter of training. I have had plenty of severe problems in the last six years working to keep my youngest child alive and paying over \$100,000 in out-of-pocket medical bills. Were these big issues? Of course they were, yet because of the way I had trained myself

in sleeping years ago, they did not interrupt my quality and sound sleeping. You can train yourself to quiet your mind when it comes to sleep. If you think of anything else after you have gone to bed, something to do, some item to follow up on, etc., then simply get out of bed and write it down.

4. Watch your diet for sleep disrupting foods

There are many other foods that can disrupt sleep beyond caffeine mentioned above. My first son was a great sleeper until he went to preschool when he began to have nightmares. I knew he loved preschool and I mean loved it with a passion, so I began to look at what else could cause a four year old to suddenly have nightmares. I eventually figured out it was the apple juice that he was getting at preschool. Once the apple juice was removed from his diet, the nightmares ended. When my second child began to wet the bed once a month – after he had been dry at night for over a year – I began to wonder why he was having these periodic bedwetting episodes. I would eventually figure out it was a food dye he was allowed to have when we went out to eat something that only happened about once a month. Once we removed this food, he no longer had a problem staying dry at night. There are many foods and many ways that food can disrupt sleep. Watch your diet and your sleeping patterns and see if you can distinguish any relationships between your diet and your sleep.

5. Don't exercise too close to Bedtime

This is pretty direct and concise. If you are having trouble sleeping and you are exercising later in the evening, change that habit for a few weeks and see if it makes a difference. Some people, by the way, can exercise closer to bed and it will not impact their sleep.

6. Is your room conducive to sleep?

Is your room neat and clean? When you walk into your room do you feel relaxed and happy or uptight and anxious? If your room is not welcoming, clean and relaxing then this is an area to go to work on.

7. Reduce your stress levels

This is easier said than done I realized. You can use breathing and relaxation techniques before bed or keep a gratitude journal. Going to bed wound up and anxious is unlikely to produce restful and peaceful sleep. Invest 10 or 15 minutes in writing down everything that you have to be grateful for in your life or what actions you will take the next day to improve an area of your life. Over time these kinds of activities can help you get in the habit of unwinding and get in the sleep mode.

8. Are you sleep deprived?

Sleep deprivation can seriously impact your health in ways that you might not imagine like interrupting your body's ability to fall into natural sleep rhythms. Make sleep a priority and start sleeping more. This alone should help you get a better quality of sleep over time.

9. Check out nutritional deficiencies

Certain nutritional deficiencies can impact your ability to sleep. Have a licensed practitioner check for nutritional deficiencies. This is important to your overall health and well being and could not only help improve your ability to sleep well; it could also prevent you from having other serious health complications.

10. What are the things you say about sleep and sleeping?

Lastly I suggest you listen to what you say about sleep and your sleeping. Here are the things that I say about sleep, as the unofficial queen of sleeping that sleeps great just about anywhere and has no trouble sleeping: “I’m a great sleeper.” “I fall asleep easily and sleep peacefully.” What do you say to yourself about sleeping? What do you say to others about sleeping? This may seem unimportant however I assert that it is critical that you have a positive, can-do attitude about you and your relationship to sleeping.