**Here’s How to Get the Perfect Night of Sleep**

There’s really nothing better than crawling into your warm bed after a long day. However, for many people, bedtime means tossing and turning until the alarm clock goes off. Lack of quality sleep leads to many mental and physical health problems. Not to mention, you certainly will be able to [perform your best at work](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/bid/345426/Sleep-Deprivation-is-Dragging-Down-Your-Business).

Believe it or not, sleep is just as important to your health as nutrition and exercise. Your body simply cannot function without enough ZZZs. So, if you find yourself counting sheep trying to fall asleep, or waking up multiple times throughout the night feeling restless, it’s time to change the way you sleep. Use these tips to start promoting good sleep habits throughout your day and create the perfect sleeping environment:

**Pre-Bedtime Habits**

Unhealthy daytime habits will lead to tossing and turning throughout the night. It’s important to consider the many factors that contribute to a quality night of sleep. Here’s how to promote a good night of sleep during the day:

*Eat for sleep.* Sneak in some [sleep-promoting foods](http://www.rd.com/health/wellness/foods-that-help-you-sleep/) – like kale, hummus, or honey – into your dinner, or eat them as a light bedtime snack. Be sure that you’re neither too full nor too hungry before bed. Digestive troubles as well as hunger pains will keep you up.

*Exercise.* Regular physical activity is great for sleep. According to [Sleep.org](https://sleep.org/articles/exercise-affects-sleep/), as little as 10 minutes of aerobic exercise, such as walking or cycling, can dramatically improve the quality of your nighttime sleep. Keep in mind that when you exercise does matter. Exercising an hour or two before bedtime will give your body energy and make it difficult to fall asleep. Stick to morning, afternoon, and early evening workouts.

*Watch what you drink.* This means no caffeine or alcohol before bedtime. To be safe, try to limit caffeinated beverages to only your mornings. A good rule of thumb is to not ingest any caffeine for at least four to six hours prior to bedtime. As for alcohol, a nightcap might help put you to sleep faster, but it disrupts your quality of sleep throughout the night. Too much alcohol before bed shortens the amount of time your body spends in deep sleep.

*Avoid bright screens.* Stay away from late night TV, laptop use, and cell phone use for about 1-2 hours prior to your bedtime. Exposure to the blue light emitted from these digital screens is distributive to sleep and messes with your circadian rhythm (your body’s internal clock) – making it difficult to fall asleep.

**Sleep Environment**

If you wake up tired in the morning even after sleeping for 7-8 hours, you might be experiencing sleep disruption from your environment. Creating the perfect sleep environment will help you fall asleep faster and stay asleep. Here are some tips to help you design your room for better sleep:

*Temperature.* According to the [National Sleep Foundation](https://sleepfoundation.org/bedroom/touch.php), research has shown that sleeping in a cool room – around 65 degrees (or between 60-67 degrees) – makes for the best sleep. This is because your body temperature will naturally peak and decline throughout the day, and this temperature pattern is tied to your sleep cycle. Your body’s temperature will naturally drop during bedtime, so a warm room temperature will disrupt your sleep cycle.

As an added bonus, science says that sleeping in a cool room is [better for your health](https://www.simplemost.com/science-says-sleeping-cold-room-better-health-because-body-heat/). Research has shown that sleeping in a cool room allows your body to release melatonin, which helps keep you [looking youthful](http://info.totalwellnesshealth.com/blog/6-everyday-habits-that-are-secretly-aging-you). A [4-month study](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24954193) also found that sleeping in a cool room helps your body burn calories, which could help lower your risks for developing metabolic diseases.

*Lighting.* Our bodies are very sensitive to light. Any type of artificial or natural lighting in your room will disrupt quality sleep. If you have windows in your room that leak in light throughout the night, invest in darkening curtains or shades.

*Noise control.* This one is a bit obvious! Any outside noises or annoying, repetitive sounds will certainly disrupt your sleep. If your room is anything but quiet during the night, try keeping a small fan in your room to drown out some noise. If you deal with sleep disruptions from a snoring bed partner, sleep with soft earplugs in.

*Bedding.* Comfort plays a big role in catching quality ZZZs. Invest in a comfortable and durable mattress that supports your back and neck. Swap out cheap pillows for quality pillows. Spend a few extra dollars on quality sheets and bedding that will keep you cool and comfortable throughout the night. Do some research and find quality bedding that will support sleep and reduce morning aches and pains.

Quality of sleep is just as important as quantity. Aim for your 7-8 hours of sleep each night and use some of these tips to ensure a peaceful night of quality ZZZs. You’ll wake up feeling alert, energized, and ready to tackle the day.