

Top 10 Strategies for Improving Sleep Quality

1. Avoid a bedroom clock or other time cues
 - set an alarm, if you must, and hide it
 - The more we are aware of time ticking by, the more difficult it is to fall asleep
2. Exercise (20+ minutes) about 6 hours prior to going to bed (late afternoon or early evening)
3. Take a hot bath 2 hours before bedtime
4. Avoid sleep inhibiting substances:
 - * coffee: long half life; after 8 hours, half of dose still active
 - * alcohol: does induce sleep, but is very light and prone to awakenings
 - * nicotine: direct central nervous system stimulant
5. Eat a light snack (avoid large meals)
 - hunger directly interferes with sleep
 - snacks of milk, cheese, malted drinks recommended
6. Try to deal with worries and anxiety before bedtime.
 - Some people benefit from setting aside 30 minutes of ‘worry time’
7. Consider cutting down your “time in bed”
 - Staying in bed longer than your body needs can cause insomnia
 - Insomniacs who cut time in bed experience more deep sleep and fewer awakenings
8. Use bed for sleeping only (no eating or watching TV in your bed)
9. If you cannot fall asleep within 30 minutes then you can get up, and read quietly, and return to bed when you feel sleepy
10. Do not sleep in late, even after a poor night of sleep.