

PRACTICE A GOOD SLEEP HYGIENE ROUTINE

If you are having issues with sleep at the moment, the first thing to consider is your “sleep hygiene routine”.

Sleep hygiene is simply a variety of good practices and habits that will help you to get a good night’s sleep.

When it comes to sleep hygiene, consistency is key, so make sure you are practicing these habits every day.



REGULAR RHYTHM

Having a regular bedtime and wake time is the first step to improving your sleep as it sets your circadian rhythm, meaning your body knows when it should be asleep and awake.

KEEP IT COOL

Your body temperature drops to its lowest while you sleep so a cool room (16-18C) is thought to be the ideal temperature. An overly warm room can cause restlessness and disturb your sleep.



KEEP IT DARK

Making sure your bedroom is dark and quiet removes distractions that could prevent you from falling asleep.



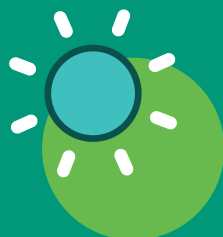
NO CAFFEINE

It almost goes without saying, but taking caffeine close to bedtime will result in sleep disturbance because it blocks the production of “adenosine” in the body, which is what causes us to feel sleepy. Try to set a daily cut-off time for your caffeine intake.



NATURAL LIGHT

Exposure to natural light within an hour after waking up can help to “set” your internal clock (circadian rhythm) which will help to regulate your sleeping pattern. You feel more alert during the day as well as feeling ready to sleep at night.



NO SCREENS

As difficult as it is, putting your phone and other screens away 30 minutes before bed is important. Not only does the blue light suppress the production of melatonin which is associated with sleep onset, but using your phone will engage your brain and prolong sleep.



DON'T CONFUSE

Using your bed for other activities such as study, work or watching TV will confuse your brain and stop it associating your bed with sleep. Use other areas of the house or room for those activities.



A WIND-DOWN ROUTINE

Instead of watching TV or using your phone, try to develop a relaxing “wind-down” bedtime routine. It could include reading, skin care, meditation or yoga. Whatever activities comprise your routine, make sure to do them every night at around the same time so that it signals to your brain and body that you are preparing for sleep.

