

Living Well Tip of the Week

Sleep Hygiene Guidelines

What is good sleep hygiene? Most people are very familiar with terms such as "dental hygiene," yet may have never heard of the term "sleep hygiene" which refers to behaviors or habits that can positively or negatively influence sleep (good versus inadequate sleep hygiene). If you are experiencing difficulty falling or staying asleep, read the following recommendations. This will help you establish healthy sleep habits and good sleep hygiene.

DO'S

- Keep a regular sleep schedule of 7-8 hours of sleep. Go to bed and arise at the same time every day, even on weekends. This will help your brain's biological clock develop a consistent sleep-wake rhythm.
- Use your bedroom for sleeping only. Avoid distractions and use a room other than your bedroom to watch TV or use a computer.
- Make your sleep environment comfortable for sleeping. Keep your bedroom dark and quiet, preferably cool. Use a mattress that suits your comfort level.

DON'T'S

- Do not go to bed hungry. Have a light snack one or several hours before bedtime if necessary.
- Avoid alcohol within four to six hours of bedtime, and don't use nicotine within two hours of going to bed.
- Do not go to bed after eating a big meal as this may cause acid reflux and heartburn. If you have a condition such as gastroesophageal reflux disease, which may cause coughing or choking, avoid eating within 3 hours of bedtime.

For more information, tools and resources go to <http://www.cdc.gov/sleep/>.