**BETTER SLEEP - FOR ALL AGES**

1. Listen to your circadian rhythm: when your body is feeling tired and you respond by going to bed – you will have the most restorative sleep
2. Have a bedtime routine: doing the same routine to get yourself ready for bed will help your body respond to familiar cues and start to wind down.
3. Listen to calm sounds/music as you fall asleep: this is another association your body will make with sleep and help to relax your mind.
4. Lavender: spray on the linens, place essential oils on your wrists and under your nose, light a scented candle, burn incense before bed: the aroma of this flower is known to aid in sleep.
5. Create the perfect environment for sleep: comfy mattress, temperature 20-22C, dark room, calm sounds like ocean or white noise (fan or humidifier).
6. Warm shower or bath before bed: the temperature relaxes muscles and relaxes the mind as well as signalling the body to prepare for sleep.
7. Meditation: focus on relaxing your body 1 muscle at a time starting with your toes and work your way up, repeat if you need.
8. No electronics 1 hour before bed: iphone, computer, tv, video games… all have stimulating lights that are counterproductive to your melatonin production and your brain is active instead of relaxing and preparing for sleep.
9. Dim lights in the evening encourage the production of melatonin.
10. Turn the alarm clock: you do not want the light shining directly on your face. The light will hinder the melatonin and watching the time passing slowly may frustrate you and add stress.
11. Don’t look @ the clock. Watching the time pass adds frustration and makes you calculate how tired you are/should be.
12. Limit EMF (electromagnetic frequency) in the bedroom: cellphones, tv, dimmer switches, cordless phones, computers, ipads, etc. all emit EMF and this can interfere with sleep.
13. Keep pets out of your bed.
14. Keep your bedroom for sleep and sex: if you can’t sleep, get up and leave the room until you feel sleepy again and then return and try again to get to sleep.
15. Keep a pen and notebook beside your bed to jot down thoughts or reminders so you can stop concentrating on them and get to sleep.
16. Exercise to release anxiety & stress – make this earlier in the day
17. Make it a goal of 6-8 hours of sleep EVERY night. A regular bedtime and wake-up time help to follow your circadian rhythm and give you the most restorative sleep.
18. Catch up on sleep: add on an extra hour or try a power nap in the day to help feel more rested.
19. Power naps: 20-30min ONLY! Will restore energy; longer than that and you get into deep sleep and will wake disoriented and feel more tired.
20. Limit caffeine to before noon: caffeine effects everyone differently and can stimulate you through the whole day.
21. Get some fresh air: sunlight and fresh air are healthy and contribute to more energy in the day. Daylight helps with regulating/setting your circadian rhythm.
22. Food before bed: there are foods that promote sleep to have before sleep and foods that will have the opposite effect. See below for more tips:

FOOD - Proper snacks in evening to help induce sleep; at least 1hr before sleep.

1. Honey i) Almonds, peanuts/peanut butter
2. Warm milk j) Tart cherry juice
3. Turkey k) DHA – natural not synthetic
4. Bananas l) Hot drinks (chamomile tea a good one)
5. Whole grains m) Yogurt/cottage cheese
6. Fortified cereals n) Jasmine rice
7. Fish o) Kale/collards
8. Chickpeas p) Flaxseeds (2tbsp in oatmeal)

ALL-DAY DIET FOR BETTER NIGHT’S SLEEP

“A pro-sleep diet starts not just before you go to bed, but the moment you wake up. The first step toward better sleep is eating balanced, nutritious meals and snacks evenly spaced throughout the day. Eat too little during the day, and you’ll overstuff yourself in the evening, leading to a night of tossing, turning, and indigestion. Eat too little for dinner, and you might find yourself lying awake, longing for a trip to the fridge.”

* eat a balanced diet throughout the day, and eat small portions more frequently.
* If you have GI issues (eg. Spicy food, alcohol, Gluten or lactose intolerance), eating these foods in evening can sabotage your sleep.
* Sugar has also been tied to sleep problems; it’s best to avoid sugar and other processed foods shortly before bed.
* Studies show that the best bedtime snack is one with complex carbs and a little bit of protein, such as cereal with milk or a small piece of whole-wheat bread with a dab of peanut butter.
* If you want to go to sleep quickly, research indicates that eating the majority of your daily recommended amount of carbohydrates at night will help. In a study published in the American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, researchers found that when participants ate a carb-rich dinner that included high-glycemic-index jasmine rice instead of lower-GI long-grain rice, they fell asleep faster. Researchers speculate the insulin triggered by the high-GI meal led to more sleep-inducing tryptophan in the brain, faster.
* A study at Yale University found that hot drinks can help people feel less lonely and more secure — both factors that can contribute to a good night’s sleep.
* If you have an upset stomach late at night, the old wives’ tale that peppermint tea can help might be true, according to researchers at Tufts University. They found peppermint tea to be a digestive aid — it may even have antiallergenic potential — meaning it can help you drift off to sleep more serenely.
* One B vitamin that helps you sleep is B3, which is naturally found in beets, pork, poultry, and peanuts. B3, also known as niacin, is a common ingredient in herbal sleep aids because it can extend your REM cycle and limit the number of times you wake up in the middle of the night.
* the omega-3 fatty acids in fish such as salmon, halibut, and anchovies can also enhance your brain’s secretion of melatonin, which is thought to be the body’s sleep signal.