



10 Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

“Sleep hygiene” is a term used for the habits that help you get sleep that is both restful and long enough. Your activities throughout the day and close to bedtime can affect your sleep. The following tips apply to both adults and children. Be sure to check out the specific tips for children at the end. Always consult your health care provider before starting any medications including melatonin or other sleep aids for your child.

These tips can help you develop good sleep habits:

- 1) **Stay on a schedule:** Go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day. Aim for 7 to 8 hours of sleep (adults). Children may require longer sleep times (see tips for children below).
- 2) **Don't skip the “wind down”:** Listen to calming music, take a warm bath, or read a relaxing book.
- 3) **Go to bed sleepy:** Set your bedtime to align with when your body starts to naturally feel tired.
- 4) **Keep it cool:** The ideal sleeping temperature is 60° to 67°F.
- 5) **Watch what you eat:** Don't eat a large meal before bed. Limit eating 2 to 3 hours before bed. If you are hungry, have a light and healthy snack.
- 6) **Silence is golden:** Turn off any noisy distractions, and use earplugs or a soft noise machine.
- 7) **Lights out:** Use a blackout shade, dim the lights on your digital clock, and stop using any electronic device at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
- 8) **Daily activity can help:** Exercise regularly and maintain a healthy diet.
- 9) **Avoid certain things:** Alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine can disrupt sleep. Avoid them starting in the afternoon or skip them altogether.
- 10) **Apply the “20-minute rule”:** If you are not asleep after 20 minutes, get out of bed and do a quiet activity in a dimly lit room, but avoid electronics.



Special considerations for children:

- **Children and infants require more sleep than adults:** Infants to children 2 years old may need 11 to 14 hours of sleep per 24 hours (including naps). Toddlers may need 10 to 13 hours per 24 hours (including naps). Teenagers generally need about 8 to 10 hours per night.
- **Children often wake at night:** It is normal for children to wake up several times at night and it's very important to teach them how to go back to sleep on their own.
- **Safe sleep for infants:** Infants should sleep **alone** on their **back** (with no loose toys or blankets), in a crib (or bassinet or portable play yard), with a **firm mattress** covered with a fitted sheet. **Avoid** sleeping on a couch, armchair, or swing. Never sleep with your baby.
- **Children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders** may have difficulties falling asleep and staying asleep. Speak to your child's autism care provider for more information before initiating any medications for sleep.
- **Melatonin use in children and adolescents:** The American Academy of Sleep Medicine released a health advisory in 2022 regarding melatonin use that includes the following:
 - Melatonin should be handled as any other medication and kept out of reach of children.
 - Before starting melatonin or any supplement in children, parents should discuss this decision with a pediatric health care professional.
 - Many sleep problems can be better managed with a change in schedules, habits, or behaviors rather than taking melatonin.
 - If melatonin is used, the health care professional can recommend the dose and timing for the sleep problem. Parents should select a product with the **USP Verified Mark** for safer use.



For more information, check out resources from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry:

Adults:

- <https://sleepeducation.org/healthy-sleep/healthy-sleep-habits/>

Children:

- <https://aasm.org/recharge-with-sleep-pediatric-sleep-recommendations-promoting-optimal-health/>
- <https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/safe-sleep/>

Medication use:

- https://www.aacap.org/App_Themes/AACAP/Docs/families_and_youth/med_guides/SleepDisorders_Parents-Medication-Guide-web.pdf
- <https://aasm.org/advocacy/position-statements/melatonin-use-in-children-and-adolescents-health-advisory/>