

Sleep Hygiene: Tips for more restful sleep (Orofacial Pain Clinic)

What should I do for a good night's sleep?

1. **Be consistent:** Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
2. **Resolve dilemmas:** Before bedtime, make a to-do list or a list of worries in order to clear your mind. Avoid stressful situations or conversations around bedtime.
3. **Keep sleep a nighttime activity:** Avoid sleeping during the day and staying awake late at night. If your sleep schedule is already switched around, work with your doctor on a plan for getting your sleep back to normal.
4. **Keep your bed as a place for sleep:** Make it a habit to watch TV, eat, read, or text messages in another room, at a table, or on a couch. Teach your body to associate going to bed with falling asleep.
5. **Get comfortable:** Make your sleep area comfortable by picking pillows and bedding that make you feel good.
6. **Create a soothing bedtime routine:** Engage in some peaceful reading or take a warm bath or shower. Try to practice some relaxation exercises.
7. **Gear down for the night:** Start preparing for sleep at least an hour ahead of time by quieting your environment and quieting your mind. Once in bed, change the channel of your mind to thoughts of pleasant activities or some other soothing visual image (e.g., beach, forest).
8. **Avoid stimulants and late-night meals that might keep you awake:** A hot cup of cocoa or coffee, a few cigarettes, or some dessert might sound good at nighttime but also may disrupt sleep. Late dinners or spicy meals might upset your stomach and keep you awake.

What should I avoid when trying to improve sleep?

1. **Caffeine:** Do not drink coffee, tea, or soft drinks in the afternoon or evening. Caffeine can keep you awake, even when consumed at lunchtime.
2. **Alcohol:** Do not have alcoholic beverages close to bedtime.
3. **TV and Books:** If you are going to watch TV or read a book, choose something that is not likely to keep you awake. Avoid stories or shows with people arguing, cliffhangers, violence, or real-life drama.
4. **Internet:** Avoid getting out of bed to surf the internet. Instead of getting sleepy, you will most likely stimulate your brain keeping you awake.
5. **Chores:** Do not get out of bed to straighten up or clean your house. Although unfinished chores may be on your mind, the process of doing physical labor in the middle of the night may tense your muscles and excite your brain rather than help you relax. This will make it harder to sleep.
6. **Exercise:** It is not a good idea to get out of bed to exercise even if you know it will tire you out. Physical activity can act as a stimulant for your mind and body. Exercise is good for sleep, but it needs to be scheduled earlier in the day. Not immediately before sleep time.
7. **Staying in bed:** Do not stay in bed if you cannot sleep. Instead, get up and do something relaxing until you are sleepy.

Please contact the Orofacial Pain Clinic at (734)-936-3940 if you have any questions or concerns.

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