



QUICK GUIDE TO **SLEEP HYGIENE**

Good sleep hygiene are the steps taken to enable you to have the best possible sleep routine. There are common steps that can be used to assist you in getting a good quality of sleep.

1. TIME

Try and have a set time for going to bed and for getting out of bed. This can help train your mind and body to the appropriate time to sleep

2. NAPPING

Avoiding sleeping during the day. If you do need to take a nap, limit it to no more than 15 minutes as this will stop you going in to a deep sleep.

3. ALCOHOL

If possible avoid alcohol for three hours before going to bed. Whilst Alcohol might make you go to sleep, you are more likely to wake and more likely to have poorer sleep quality.

4. CAFFEINE

Avoid caffeine for at least two hours before your bedtime. Caffeine is stimulant which can create difficulties in going to sleep. Caffeine is also a diuretic which increases the amount of urine produced and lead to waking during the night to urinate.

5. EXERCISE

Get physical exercise during the day but avoid strenuous exercise for two hours before bed as this can increase difficulties in going to sleep

6. WORRIES

Try not to take your worries to bed. Write them down an hour before bed, prioritise any that need doing the following day and set them aside.

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7. TECHNOLOGY

Switch off your mobile phone, or if you are using it as an alarm, turn it on to airplane mode to stop the risk of being disturbed. Try and avoid blue light produced by screens as there is some research to say it interferes with our natural sleep cycle

8. RELAXATION

Practise something to relax you before going to bed. This could be anything from having a bath, reading a book or doing progressive muscle relaxation, light yoga, gentle breathing exercises or meditation.

9. ENVIRONMENT

Create the right environment to sleep. Keep the bedroom as a restful place, not an office or a workroom. Reduce the amount of stimulating colours and things. Keep the room dark at night and at a comfortable cool temperature

10. TELEVISION

Do not have a television or laptop in the bedroom. Watching programmes or doing things on a laptop or other technology requires concentration and this causes the brain to wake.

11. CLOCK WATCHING

Avoid clock watching. Looking at your clock to see what time it is when you are trying sleep and seeing how long you have been awake, creates additional pressure on you to sleep and it does not allow the mind to relax.

12. WHEN YOU DO NOT FALL TO SLEEP

If you do not fall asleep in 15 - 20 minutes, or if you wake during the night and can not get back to sleep, get up leave the bedroom, do not remain in bed. Try some reading, have a light snack, or do some quiet activity for a short period. Do not attempt any activities which will make you more alert such as household chores, office work, watching television, using your mobile phone or work/play on the computer. When you are feeling tired, go back to bed and try to fall asleep. If you are still not sleeping after 15-20 minutes, get up again until you feel tired.

