

# Tips for Sleeping Better

## MY NIGHTLY ROUTINE

### 1 Maintain a regular wake and sleep schedule (Even on Weekends).

Getting in sync with your body's natural sleep-wake cycle—your circadian rhythm—is one of the most important strategies for achieving good sleep.

### 2 Create a sleep-friendly environment.

A sleep-friendly environment is one that is dark, cool, quiet, comfortable and interruption-free.

### 3 Turn off the electronics at least one hour before sleep.

Light from television, computer, and backlit devices stimulate the brain and prevent restful sleep. Try listening to music or audio books instead, or practicing relaxation exercises. If your favorite TV show is on late at night, record it for viewing earlier in the day.

### 4 Don't eat within 2 to 3 hours of your planned bedtime.

Try to avoid heavy meals right before bed – eating or drinking too much before bed can make you feel uncomfortable as you are settling down.

### 5 Exercise regularly and try to complete your workout at least a few hours before bedtime.

Regular exercise makes it easier to fall asleep and can improve sleep quality. As little as 20 to 30 mins of daily activity helps.

### 6 Cut down on caffeine.

Caffeine is a stimulant. This means it causes your body to be more alert. Caffeine (found in coffee, tea, soda and chocolate) can stay in the body for 3 to 5 hours—sometimes longer!

### 7 Avoid alcohol and nicotine close to bedtime.

Alcohol increases night time awakenings, leading to less restful sleep. Nicotine is a stimulant, which can make it difficult to fall asleep.

### 8 Limit afternoon naps to one hour or less.

An early afternoon nap may help you get through your day. It is OK to take a short nap after lunch, but don't nap longer than an hour, and never later than 2 or 3PM.

### 9 Get some good Zzz's before your next big test!

Sleep helps with memory. During the REM (rapid eye movement) phase of sleep, your brain determines what's important to know and stores it for future use.

*Did you know?  
A lack of sleep can result in fatigue, irritability, lack of concentration, and increased stress?*



*In the long run, a reduced amount of sleep can lead to a weakened immune system, depression, high blood pressure, and even a lowered GPA!*