



7 Steps to a Better Night's Sleep

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The Caregiver Resource Center
www.TheCaregiverResourceCenter.com

Sleep is nature's way of recharging your batteries, restoring your spirits and healing the little wounds of daily life.

Shakespeare wrote of "sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care."

A good night's sleep is especially important when your health is not at its best. Try these tried and true methods for easing into sleep.

To follow are seven simple steps to help you get a better night's sleep.

STEP 1 - ESTABLISH A ROUTINE

Sleep is a lover of routine. A series of unchanging activities done at the same time and in the same way each night train your body and mind to gear down into sleep mode.

Putting the cat out, brushing your teeth, stretching, wearing night clothes and snuggling up with a favorite book are all cues to your subconscious to get sleepy, if they're done the same way each night.

STEP 2 - MAKE YOUR BEDROOM SLEEP FRIENDLY

- Keep your room dark, or use eye pads.
- If noise is a problem, use earplugs or block sounds with white noise machines or recordings of waves or other sounds from nature.
- If your joints ache at night, get some extra pillows to cushion them.
- Make it easier to move around under the covers with satin sheets and pajamas.

- Keep your bedroom uncluttered.
- Keep your business work out of your bedroom.

STEP 3 - PUT YOUR WORRIES ON HOLD

If worries follow you to bed, try this: Write down what you're worried about. If they're problems you can resolve, write what you're going to do about them in the morning, even if it's just to spend 15 minutes thinking about them.

Promising to give your worries future attention gives your mind permission to let go of them until morning.

STEP 4 - PUT STRESS TO REST

Life is stressful, especially when you add the strains of a chronic illness. Try to resolve as many of the stress-causing matters in your life as you can.

Then learn stress-relieving techniques to cope with those stresses you can't get rid of. Such techniques include deep breathing, meditation and progressive muscle relaxation.

STEP 5 - THINGS TO DO BEFORE BED

- Take a leisurely evening stroll.
- Take a warm bath.
- Drink warm milk or have a light snack.
- Work a crossword puzzle or read.
- Listen to soothing music.
- Try self-massage, or ask someone close to you.
- Use your relaxation techniques -progressive muscle relaxation, visualization or meditation.

(Add some other techniques that have worked for you here.)

STEP 6 - THINGS TO AVOID BEFORE BED

- Internet use
- The news
- Computer work
- Caffeine after 4 p.m.
- Heavy meals late in the evening

- Excessive alcohol
- Heavy exercise
- Arguments or stressful situations
- Upsetting or high action TV shows

STEP 7 - MAINTAIN GOOD HEALTH HABITS

Regular meals and daily exercise both contribute to the sense of well-being that leads to a good night's sleep.

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

In spite of your best efforts, many things can rob you of sleep just when you need it most.

If you're losing sleep because of pain, discomfort, stress, worry, anxiety, side effects of medications, or depression; talk with your doctor about what you can do.

Remember that help is just a phone call away!

Source: Parlay International

RESOURCES

American Academy of Sleep

<http://www.aasmnet.org/>

American Sleep Apnea Association

<http://www.sleepapnea.org/>

Centers for Disease Control (CDC)

<https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/resources.html>

MIT Medical

<https://medical.mit.edu/community/sleep/resources>

National Sleep Foundation

<https://sleepfoundation.org/>

Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation

<https://www.rls.org/>

Sleep for Kids

<http://www.sleepforkids.org/>

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Please consult your health care provider for an appointment, before making any healthcare decisions or for guidance about a specific medical condition.

Linda Ziac is the owner and founder of The Caregiver Resource Center. The Caregiver Resource Center is a division of Employee Assistance Professionals, Inc. which Linda founded in October 1990. The Caregiver Resource Center provides a spectrum of concierge case management and advocacy services for seniors, people with special needs and families.

Linda's professional career spans more than 40 years in the health and mental health field as a CT Licensed Professional Counselor, CT Licensed Alcohol and Drug Counselor, Board Certified Employee Assistance Professional, Board Certified Case Manager, and Board Certified Dementia Practitioner. In addition, Ms. Ziac has 15 years of experience coordinating care for her own parents.

Linda assists seniors, people with special needs and their families; in planning for and implementing ways to allow for the greatest degree of health, safety, independence, and quality of life. Linda meets with individuals and family members to assess their needs, and develop a Care Team, while working with members of the Team to formulate a comprehensive Care Plan (a road map).

Once a plan is in place, Linda is available to serve as the point person to monitor and coordinate services, and revise the plan as needed. This role is similar to the conductor of an orchestra; ensuring that there is good communication, teamwork, and that everyone remains focused on the desired goal.

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