

Sleep Tips for Teens

(Based on tips for children by Dr Montgomery)

1. Too much activity close to bedtime can keep you awake so give yourself some time to relax.
2. Create yourself a Bedtime Routine:
 - a. Set a regular time for bed each night and try to stick to it.
 - b. Establish a relaxing bedtime routine, such as having a warm bath, hot milky drink or reading a book.
 - c. Make sure you settle down to sleep when you are tired ... don't try and stay up to 'watch more thing' or have 'just 5 more minutes'.
3. Avoid big meals close to bedtime.
 - a. Avoid anything with caffeine (e.g. tea, coffee, coca cola) within six hours of bedtime. And, remember, chocolate has caffeine!!!
 - b. Avoid sweets and sugary drinks, as this will give your body a sugar boost and will prevent you from sleeping. Do not have energy drinks!
 - c. Dietary changes can cause sleep problems, if someone is struggling with a sleep problem, it's not a good time for dietary changes.
4. Set the bedroom temperature so that it's comfortable – not too warm or too cold.
5. Make sure the bedroom is dark. If necessary, use a nightlight.
6. Keep the noise level low, you may want to play some peaceful music.
7. Avoid having naps during the day; it can disturb your normal pattern of sleep.
8. Exercise can promote good sleep when you do it regularly.
 - a. Vigorous exercise should be taken in the morning or late afternoon.
 - b. Relaxing exercise done before bed can help initiate a restful night's sleep.
9. Ensure adequate exposure to natural light. Natural light exposure helps maintain a healthy sleep-wake cycle.
10. Try to avoid emotionally upsetting conversations and activities before trying to go to sleep. Don't dwell on, or bring your problems to bed.
11. Associate bed with sleep. It's not a good idea to use the bed to watch TV, listen to the radio, or read. Have a "buffer zone" between TV and computer use and bedtime as this allows for a 'winding down' time before sleep.
12. Check with your Dr whether there are any medicines you are taking (such as some asthma medicines and decongestants) that may be interfering with the quality of your sleep. Don't be afraid to ask about alternatives.