

How To Sleep

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NIGHTTIME

- Create a sleep-promoting environment that is **completely dark, cool and comfortable**.
- Use **all-natural bedding** that feels comfy so you can nest!
- Try to keep a routine: go to sleep and wake up at the **same time** each day, even on weekends.
- **Do not look at the clock in bed**. Turn it away or cover the light.
- Aim for **7-9 hrs sleep/night**.
- Do not eat or drink too much close to bedtime.
- Use the bed and bedroom for sleep and sex only.
- Avoid abrupt noises – **block out sounds** with a bedside fan, air filter, vaporizer or white-noise machine or app.
- **Naturally boost your melatonin** at night:
 - Meditate or practice Divine Sleep Yoga Nidra meditation (studies show it boosts melatonin).
 - Reduce stress.
 - Go to sleep early.
 - **Avoid all electronics** a few hours before bed (TV, computer, smart phones etc).
 - **Dim all the lights** in the house after sunset.
 - Do not turn light on to go to the bathroom at night.
 - Wear something over the eyes to increase darkness (I like Tempur-pedic's sleep mask).
 - Turn off all lights & electronics before bed and turn off Wi-Fi.
 - Get **more outdoor light** in the daytime.
 - Avoid taking melatonin inhibiting medications several hours before bed (beta blockers, calcium channel blockers, anti-anxiety drugs, non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs, steroids and some antidepressants).
 - **Avoid sugar and caffeine** any time of the day as they decrease levels of melatonin.

DAYTIME

- Consume less or **no caffeine for 14 hours before sleeping**.
- **Avoid alcohol and nicotine**, especially close to bedtime.
- **Daily exercise** 30mins/day especially outdoors (not within three hours before bedtime).
- Nap no longer than 30mins during the day if you need to.
- **Increase your light exposure** during the day: try to get 1 hour of outdoor light/day (that means- go outside for 1hr/day!)
- Eat dinner early. Consider having **lunch as the largest meal** and dinner as a smaller meal.
- Avoid stress. **Do not watch or read evening news**.
- Keep a sleep diary to identify your sleep habits and patterns so you can begin to reflect.

Medical and other conditions may need evaluation for possible treatment (traditional and/or complementary). The important ones are: sleep apnea (potentially life threatening), restless leg syndrome, gastroesophageal reflux (GERD), conditions involving chronic pain, medications that interfere with sleep or dreaming, menopause and peri-menopause