

# QUICK TIPS FOR better sleep



Tips sourced from the websites of both the *American Academy of Sleep Education* (2020) and the *Sleep Foundation* (2022).



## Get Into a Routine

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule. It is tempting to sleep in on weekends and during holidays, but this can mess with the quantity and quality of your sleep. Try to go to bed and wake up around the same time every night (+/- an hour).
- Try to go to sleep early enough to ensure you get 7-8 hours of sleep.
- Establish a calming bedtime routine. This could include meditation or relaxing yoga.

## Disconnect & Wind Down

- Don't get into bed unless you are sleepy. Try to avoid laying in bed to relax during the day since your brain may start to associate your bed with being awake, which may make it harder to sleep at night.
- Limit exposure to bright lights before bedtime. Turn off electronic devices at least 30 minutes to an hour before bed.
- Avoid eating a large meal right before getting into bed. If you are hungry after dinner, eat a light snack instead.

### Trying These Tips

It takes time to build a better sleep routine! Don't expect to try a tip once and immediately get better sleep. Stick with it for one to two weeks before deciding the tip doesn't work for you.

## Healthy Habits

### Healthy Lifestyle, Healthy Sleep

- Incorporate mindful movement into your day. Move your body in a way that brings you joy! Go for a walk or run, play sports, dance, lift weights, swim, etc.
- Eat nutritious foods that you enjoy and drink plenty of water. Eating healthy looks different for everyone, so honour what is right for you and your body.
- Limit caffeine consumption to the morning and early afternoon.
- Avoid consuming alcohol before bedtime.
- Avoid drinking lots of fluids too close to bedtime as this may lead to waking up in the night to use the loo.

## Still Having Trouble?

- If it has been 20+ minutes and you still can't fall asleep, get out of bed. Try doing a calming, quiet activity, such as reading or stretching, without a lot of light exposure. Do not use electronics as the light from the screen will wake up your brain and make it harder to fall asleep.
- If nightmares wake you up, try mindfulness exercises, such as a breathing routine, sleep meditation, or body scan to feel more connected with the present moment. Mindfulness can help you feel more calm and safe, which can help you fall back asleep more quickly.

If none of these tips work, please contact your GP for medical advice.