



## The Brain & Body Health Institute, P.A.

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### **HABITS FOR HEALTHY SLEEP<sup>1</sup>**

#### 1) Daytime:

- Engage in daily exercise for health and improved quality of sleep. Avoid exercise within 3-4 hrs of sleep.
- Avoid naps or limit to 20 minutes *total* per day.
- Limit caffeinated beverages to two servings per day and *none* after noon.
- No nicotine- it is a stimulant.

#### 2) Bedtime:

- Keep a consistent sleep schedule: get up at the same time *every* morning, allow for 7 hrs of sleep or more; go to bed at the *same time* every night (weekdays and weekends). This routine trains your brain to know it is time to sleep.
- Avoid exposure to bright light in the evenings: No electronic device use in last hr before sleep.<sup>2</sup>
- Establish a relaxing bedtime routine and quiet setting:
  - 1) Consider a soothing bath, shower, or relaxing music, meditation/prayer, etc., to reduce anxiety and stress. Avoid engaging in stressful thoughts or activities near bedtime. Try to resolve issues or concerns *before* bedtime and/or jot down the list and set aside for tomorrow.
  - 2) Train your brain to associate your bed as a *sanctuary for sleep* (or sex) only. No eating, reading, TV, phone use, pets, work, or clock in sight of the bed.
  - 3) Reduce disruptive noise with ear-plugs or consider a white noise machine while sleeping.
  - 4) Consider black-out shades for windows or quality eye mask.
  - 5) Keep the room at a comfortable, cool temperature.
- If you can't fall asleep after 20 minutes, get out of bed, go to another room and engage in a relaxing activity (but NOT light-emitting electronics) until you feel sleepy, then return to bed.
- Avoid heavy meals or drinking fluids near bedtime. Avoid alcohol- Although it may reduce time to fall into a *light* sleep, it interferes with going into *deep* sleep (which affects memory & concentration).

#### 3) Signs or Symptoms to Discuss with your Physician:

- Nighttime reflux (heartburn)
- Snoring or momentarily pauses in breathing (sleep apnea)
- Physically moving/acting out dreams (REM Behavior Disorder)
- Frequent unpleasant sensation in your legs at rest at night causing you to move your legs for temporary relief but interfering with falling or staying asleep. (Restless Leg Syndrome).

<sup>1</sup> References: [https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about\\_sleep/sleep\\_hygiene.html](https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about_sleep/sleep_hygiene.html); <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/adult-health/in-depth/sleep/art-20048379>; <https://sleepeducation.org/healthy-sleep/healthy-sleep-habits/>;

<sup>2</sup> Light-emitting devices can suppress melatonin and disturb circadian rhythms/sleep-cycle.