

10 Ways to Get a Good Night's Sleep

Do you have trouble falling asleep? Suffer from insomnia? Or, maybe you can get to sleep OK, but wake up in the middle of the night and find your brain working overtime.

Over the years, I've worked with many people who suffer from poor quality sleep, and they've ranging from busy professionals and shift workers to new parents (including parents of new puppies!)

So, this month I'm sharing a range of ideas I've found really helpful for improving both the depth and quantity of your sleep.

- 1. Create a bedtime ritual that you look forward to:** Bedtime is perfect for a downshifting ritual. You can literally teach yourself to get calm before bed by incorporating a few the following - lighting candles, taking a bath or shower, sipping on a cup of chamomile tea, doing some yoga poses or taking deep breaths while thinking calm and peaceful thoughts. Creating bedtime rituals that you do every night will condition your mind and body for sleep.
- 2. Exercise earlier in the day:** Exercising early will energise you for the day and also help you fall asleep at night because your body needs rest from the exertion. Conversely, exercising late in the day will energise you at the time that you want to be able to relax, and it's also likely to keep you awake. If you want to sleep well, exercise at least 3 hours before going to bed.
- 3. Avoid known stimulants:** Steer clear of caffeinated products, including decaf coffee and chocolate, cigarettes, sugar and alcohol before bedtime.
- 4. Make your bedroom a cool, dark and quiet retreat:** Ensure any electronic devices are either turned off or as far away from your head as possible, Close curtains or blinds so street lights don't annoy you and, if it's a warm night, cool your room with a fan or air conditioning. All of these things will make you want to nestle or snuggle up in bed, just like you did as a child.
- 5. Establish your sleep clock and sleep only at bedtime:** Start conditioning yourself to fall asleep at the same time each night. Eventually, your body will subconsciously and consciously unwind and fall asleep easily at a regularly scheduled time.
- 6. Try supplementing with melatonin:** Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone produced by the pineal gland and is the most powerful natural remedy for restoring both quality and quantity of sleep. It improves the length of time the body sustains deep, stage 4 sleep - the time when the immune system and growth hormone production reaches its maximum. Speak to a naturopath or your health practitioner to find out if this might be a good option for you.
- 7. Make your bedroom a work-free and worry-free zone:** Don't work, watch TV, eat or read in bed. It might also help before going to bed to take some time out to process your day on paper. Write about anything that's upset you, your worries or fears, then, once there's nothing left to write, tear that piece of paper up and throw it away! Don't carry your worries with you into bed. If you prefer, set aside a specific time during the day for worrying and, come bedtime, consciously release those worries, like letting go of a helium balloon.



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10 Ways to Be More Productive at Work

8. Wind-down and sleep more peacefully with the use of essential oils: Diffusing essential oils in your bedroom, mixing them with epsom salts and adding to bath water, or applying them to the soles of your feet, back of your neck or temples will help you sleep like a baby. Young Living produces a wonderful range of therapeutic-grade oils to help with sleep, such as lavender, dorado azul, valerian, orange, Roman chamomile and blends such as RutaVala (my favourite), Tranquil, Peace and Calming, Stress Away, Surrender and Trauma Life.

9. Sleeping with a snorer?: As many as 25 per cent of adults snore regularly. Here are a few things you - and they can do to help either or both of you: 1. Ask them to avoid heavy meals and alcohol before bedtime. 2. Allow the person who doesn't snore to fall asleep before the snorer. 3. Ask the snorer to sleep on their side. 4. Rubbing 4 to 6 drops of one of the following Young Living oils on the soles of the snorer's feet can also help. Choose from sandalwood, lavender, valerian, ylang ylang or try one of these blends: RutaVala, Stress Away, Sacred Mountain or Valor.

10. Visualise and/or meditate before sleep: Before bed, while sitting in a chair, or perhaps soaking in a bath, imagine that a large shiny, warm rock has been placed on each part of your body that feels tense. Take an inventory of your body's tense areas, starting with your feet and moving all the way up to your neck and head. As you take a few deep breaths, feel the warm rock opening up and dissolving any tension from your muscles. Once you've finished scanning your body and releasing all tension, tell yourself, 'I'm now relaxed and ready to go to sleep.'

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