

Building a Better Night's Sleep

- Establish regular bedtime and morning awakening times that you maintain seven days per week.
- Go to bed at night when you notice feeling drowsy; learn to distinguish between fatigue and sleepiness.
- Design and maintain a comforting bedtime ritual.
- Turn off the T.V. Rarely is the late night news soothing or relaxing!
- If weaning yourself from a T.V. habit is difficult, substitute a relaxation or nature sounds CD.
- Customize your sleep environment; invest in a really good mattress and pillows.
- Keep noise and light levels low; use a bathroom or hallway nightlight to prevent falls.
- Maintain a slightly cool room temperature for better REM sleep.
- Banish animals from your bed!
- Designate your bedroom for sleep and sex, not an all-purpose space.
- Limit daytime napping to a 40-minute NASA nap. (yes, tested by astronauts)
- Avoid strenuous exercise, alcohol, nicotine and caffeine within 4 hours of your bedtime.
- Eliminate the common but bad habit of "checking the clock" throughout the night.
- Limit prescription sedatives to a 2-week period; instead, try over-the-counter alternatives such as Valerian root capsules, or Calms Forte, a homeopathic formula.

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