

Dr. Morse's Sleep Hygiene Instructions

Maintain a Drive For Sleep:

1. **Avoid Naps.** Napping is evil. Naps less than two hours in length are worthless in resetting the brain. In my experience, napping is used as a means to escape problems. If you stay awake during the day, it will force yourself to sleep at night and reset your Circadian Clock.
2. **Exercise** during the day. Ideally 40 minutes each day, that makes you break a sweat. I recommend walking. Walking before dinner may curb your appetite.

Think About Circadian Factors:

3. **Get Up at the same time every morning.** That means no sleeping in on the weekends. If your body is used to sleeping in on Saturday and Sunday, how could you expect it to get up on time on Monday? Condition yourself to get up every morning at the same time and you will.
4. Get at least one half hour of sunlight within 30 minutes of getting up.

Avoid Drug Effects:

5. **Don't smoke to get yourself back to sleep or at night.** Nicotine is a stimulant. I recommend quitting smoking entirely.
6. **Don't drink caffeine after 10 am.** Caffeine is a stimulant and has a six-hour half-life. Try to taper caffeine off entirely. It's in coffee, tea, sodas, and chocolate. Read food labels for it.
7. **Alcohol** inhibits deep "delta" sleep that resets the brain. Don't drink alcohol. You may think it makes you sleep or even pass out, but that's not quality sleep. It's not quantity but quality sleep that's important. Alcohol-related sleep disorders can persist for years after stopping alcohol.
8. Avoid other stimulants – ephedrine, amphetamines, cocaine, and marijuana...
9. Don't use herbs. Melatonin is not helpful, unless you have jetlag.

Decrease Arousal in Sleep Setting:

10. **Turn your alarm clock around so you can't see it.** Your eyes may open in alpha sleep and if you see the time, you'll start doing the math in your head about how much time you have left until you have to get up. It may add to frustration. Don't let this happen.
11. **Use your bed for only two things – sleep and sex.** Don't read in bed. Don't watch TV in bed. Don't do anything in bed that you would associate with any anxiety. When you hit your bed, your body should know that it is the place you sleep. So if you can't sleep, get out of bed and return when you feel sleepy. It takes the "normal person" about 30 minutes to fall asleep. You won't know how long you've been in bed, because you've turned your clock around.
12. Avoid strenuous exercise after dinner. Even though you may feel physically tired, endorphins are stimulating.
13. Don't eat or drink much for 3 hours before bedtime, especially if you have reflux.
14. Keep your bedroom dark, quiet, well ventilated, and at a comfortable temperature throughout the night. Earplugs and eyeshades are OK.
15. Use a bedtime ritual. Deep breathing, listening to relaxing music, progressive muscle relaxation, reading for fun out of bed, positive visualizations, meditation may help.
16. An occasional sleeping pill is OK. If I'm prescribing you medications, check with me first.
17. Don't sleep with pets. They tend to wake people up.
18. If you snore, wake, or kick your partner frequently, you may have a sleep disorder and may need a sleep study.
19. Avoid unfamiliar sleep environments. Sleep in your own bed.
20. Make certain your mattress is not too soft or too firm.
21. Use stress management in the daytime. Put your troubles away at bedtime. If you need to, write a list of things to do or worries before bedtime and put them aside before bed.