

Sleep Strategies for Teens

Sleep is very important – and not just to keep you from dozing off in class! Sleeping well helps you focus and learn during the day, and also boosts your mood.

- Have a **consistent bedtime** and wake-up time.
 - Make a plan so you can get your **goal of 8-10 hours of sleep** each night.
 - Stick to your bedtime, even on weekends!
- Have a regular **night-time routine**, such a bath or shower, brushing teeth, going to the bathroom, and reading a book.
- **Turn off all screens two hours before bedtime.**
 - Screen-time is stimulating, and affects our circadian sleep-wake cycles.
 - Studies show teens who take their phones to bed get two hours less of sleep a night - that's 14 hours a week!
 - Remove screens from your room. Leave your phone outside the room, turn it off, or put it to “do-not-disturb” so you aren't woken by texts or alerts.
- Keep your bedroom quiet, and not too warm or too cold.
 - Consider thick or blackout curtains.
 - Your bed is just for sleep! Any stressful activities should be done elsewhere.
- Get at least **1 hour of physical activity every day**. Avoid exercising just before bed.
- Avoid taking naps, especially after 3pm.
- Avoid caffeine (coffee, tea, energy drinks etc.) in the afternoon and evening. Avoid eating a large meal just before bedtime.
- Try white noise (such as a fan or white noise machine) or soft music in your room.
- **If you are struggling to sleep**
 - Avoid watching the clock
 - If you have been in bed for 20-30 minutes and have not fallen asleep...
 - Get up and do a quiet activity (reading, drawing, journaling, meditating).
 - Keep the lights low.
 - Avoid checking your phone or turning screens back on.
 - If your brain “won't turn off,” get out a journal and write about what you are thinking. If you are worrying about tasks, make a to-do list for the next day.
- If you are still struggling to sleep even after trying these strategies, you can try melatonin (start with 1-3mg about 30 minutes before bedtime).

More information: talk to your provider, or visit www.healthychildren.org