

WHEN I AWAKE, I WILL FEEL GREAT

How to Sleep Better



PRE-SLEEP ROUTINES

- Light inhibits the secretion of melatonin, a hormone that naturally promotes sleep. So, dim the lights while you are getting ready for bed. Your body is programmed to sleep when it is dark, so you can encourage that rhythm by easing into nighttime
- Hide digital clocks and glowing electronics from your view. Put a night-light in your hallway or bathroom in case you need to get up; that's better than turning on a ceiling light, which would disrupt melatonin levels. And if street lamps or moonlight shines in from outside, consider installing heavy window shades or wearing a dark sleep mask.
- Your body temperature naturally drops as you drift into sleep, so cooling down your bedroom can jump start the process and make it easier to doze off. Most experts advise setting your thermostat 5° to 10° lower than your average daytime temperature.
- Put away electronics at least one hour before you plan on going to sleep. Blue light, which emits from televisions, phones, computers, etc., is very effective at inhibiting melatonin production – thus reducing both the quantity and quality of your sleep.

TIPS TO SLEEP BETTER

- Avoid caffeine after lunch and don't drink/smoke within 6 hours of bedtime.
- Be sure not to eat/drink in your bed.
- Don't go to bed hungry, but do not eat a large meal close to when you go to bed. You should aim to eat your last meal about 3-4 hours before heading to bed. You should also try to eat your meals at the same time every day to keep your inner clock on schedule.
- Avoid heavy or spicy foods close to bedtime, instead opt for light snacks (bananas, nuts, yogurt, popcorn, etc.)
- Exercise regularly in the mornings or afternoon.
- Avoid taking naps; but, if you must, keep them short and don't nap after 3 pm.
- Don't use your bed for anything other than sleep and sex.
- Establish a regular bedtime routine that will allow you to unwind.
- Journal your worries/concerns before bed.
- Sudden, loud noises from inside or outside the home can disrupt sleep. Steady, low sounds such as the whir of a fan or air conditioner are soothing because they help block out distracting noises.
- Get good light exposure during the day. Expose yourself to bright light/sunlight after awakening, this will help to regulate your body's natural biological clock.
- Comfortable sheets are also important as are pillows for neck support.

