Make your bedroom a sleep haven

Your bedroom environment plays a large role in getting a good night's sleep. Studies show that your sleep setting can significantly influence your sleep quality. Temperature, noise, smell, light levels and comfort can all combine to build the perfect sleep environment, allowing you to fall asleep and stay asleep. Creating an environment that promotes relaxation is the goal.

Here are some ways to make your bedroom more conducive to a good night's sleep:

1. **Set your room to the right temperature.** Aim for a cool, comfortable bedroom setting that allows your body to temperature-regulate and keep from overheating. The ideal room temperature for better sleep is around 65 degrees Fahrenheit.
2. **Reduce noise.** It's hard to fall and stay asleep when there's too much noise. Research shows that noise not only affects the quality of sleep but may also have long term effects on your overall health. If noise levels are out of your control, try a white noise machine, sleep headphones or earplugs.
3. **Make your room as dark as possible.** Your body's natural rhythms respond to light and exposure to light may cause your brain to think it's daytime. This is called the circadian rhythm. It's important to eliminate all light from your room including electronic devices like computers, TVs and cellphones. If too much light comes through your windows or curtains, switch to blackout curtains or wear a sleep mask.
4. **Use soothing aromas.** Some scents such as lavender, rose, and chamomile have been proven to promote a sense of relaxation and help you sleep.
5. **Keep your room organized and clean.** An unorganized or cluttered room can cause you to feel stressed and affect your sleep.
6. **Update your mattress and bedding.** A mattress should be supportive and provide pressure point relief for your body weight and sleeping position for optimal rest. A new mattress can be a significant investment, but research has found that it can improve sleep and decrease stress and back pain. In addition to your mattress, sheets, pillows, and blankets play an important role in making your bed comfortable. Pillows can prevent neck pain by keeping your head and spine properly aligned, and your bedding can create a soft and cozy feel while helping to manage your body temperature. To keep your bed feeling fresh and reduce buildup of dust and allergens, wash your sheets at least every two weeks and your pillowcases weekly.

