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Sleep *basics* and practical *tips*

Introduction

Why sleep *matters*

Sleep is *not just about rest.*

It plays a vital role in healing, emotional balance, brain performance, metabolism, and immune function. The quality of your sleep directly affects how you feel every day, your long-term health, and even your ability to maintain a healthy weight. Optimizing your sleep doesn't require absolute perfection–just consistent, intentional efforts across a few key areas.

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The 10 key *sleep factors*

1 Hormones

Hormonal signals regulate when you feel alert and when you feel sleepy. Melatonin signals that it's time to wind down. Adenosine builds up in your body and increases the "pressure" you feel to go to sleep as the day progresses. Cortisol wakes you up and responds to stress. DHEA helps buffer stress and supports resilience.

Interventions:

- Avoid artificial light after sunset–use dim, amber lighting to boost melatonin.
- Cut caffeine after 2 p.m. to avoid blocking adenosine's effects.
- Reduce cortisol with stress-reduction tools like journaling or nature walks.
- Support DHEA levels through strength training, healthy fats, and possibly adaptogens like ashwagandha or rhodiola.

2 Sleep timing

Your body loves consistency. Erratic bedtimes or "social jetlag" on weekends can confuse your internal clock, which impairs sleep quality and next-day energy.

Interventions:

- Pick a wake-up time and stick to it, weekends included. Use morning light to reinforce this wake-up time.
- Adjust bedtime slowly if needed, rather than making large shifts.
- Schedule mentally demanding tasks during your natural high-energy times (which relate to your chronotype).

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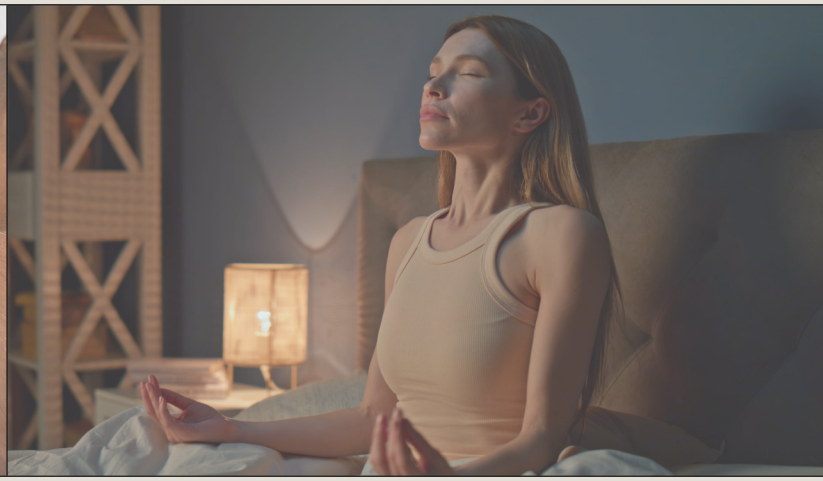
3 Temperature

Sleep onset is triggered by a natural drop in core body temperature. Helping your body cool off supports deep sleep.

Interventions:

- Set bedroom temp between 60–67°F.
- Use breathable bedding and pajamas.
- A warm shower 90 minutes before bed helps initiate a temperature drop.
- Avoid exercise, saunas, or heavy meals close to bedtime.
- Track sleep with a wearable to see how thermal tweaks affect deep sleep.



4 Nervous system load

Your autonomic nervous system needs to shift from "fight or flight" to "rest and digest." A stressed system can delay sleep or cause restless nights.

Interventions:

- Use HRV as a nightly check-in.
- Try the 4-7-8 breathing exercise, cyclic sighing, or guided meditations before bed.
- Incorporate daily "buffer zones" like nature walks or unplugging 30–60 minutes before sleep.
- Use journaling to release anxious thoughts. For ongoing tension, consider therapy, massage, or breathwork.

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5 Light exposure

Light is the most powerful regulator of your circadian rhythm. Morning light helps reset your internal clock. Evening light can delay sleep and suppress melatonin.

Interventions:

- Go outside within 30 minutes of waking.
- Avoid overhead lights after sunset. Switch to lamps.
- Set screens to night mode and use blue-light blocking glasses. Keep devices out of the bedroom.
- Sleep in a cave-like space: cool, dark, and quiet

6 Metabolism

Your blood sugar, food timing, and meal composition influence how well you sleep. Late or heavy meals can disrupt sleep, while stable blood sugar supports restful nights.

Interventions:

- Finish dinner 3+ hours before bed.
- For late-night hunger, try a carb-protein snack (e.g., kiwi with yogurt).
- Avoid alcohol late in the evening–it fragments sleep.
- Track how your energy and cravings shift with meal timing.
- For blood sugar concerns, explore CGMs or track patterns using a food and sleep journal.

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7 Oxygenation

Poor breathing habits or airway restrictions can lead to snoring, restlessness, or even sleep apnea. Nasal breathing supports deeper, more restorative sleep.

Interventions:

- Use nasal strips or saline rinses before bed.
- Try breath retraining or CO_2 tolerance drills.
- Keep plants in your room for natural air filtering.
- Explore mouth taping for those who breathe through their mouths at night.
- If snoring or daytime fatigue persists, get screened for sleep apnea.

8 Gut health

Your gut and brain are in constant communication. A healthy gut helps produce neurotransmitters (like serotonin) that influence sleep.

Interventions:

- Eat a diverse diet with fiber and fermented foods (e.g., sauerkraut, kefir).
- Avoid large doses of sugar, alcohol, or late-night spicy foods that may disrupt the gut.
- Support digestion with ginger, bitters, or light movement after meals.
- Consider prebiotic and probiotic supplements if recommended.

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The 10 key *sleep factors*

9 Environmental interference

Subtle signals in your space can cue your body to stay alert. Light pollution, EMFs, clutter, or disruptive sounds all matter.

Interventions:

- Use blackout curtains, cover lights from electronics, and turn off WiFi overnight.
- Keep your bedroom device-free.
- Keep the room clean and free of visual clutter.
- Use grounding practices like walking barefoot, forest bathing, or using grounding mats if EMF sensitivity is suspected.

10 Triggers & routines

Routines and cues help condition your brain for rest. Think of them as your personal "sleep switch."

Interventions:

- Create a 20- to 30-minute bedtime ritual. This could include dimming the lights, using calming scents like lavender or cedar, journaling, light stretching, or reading fiction.
- Use the same sequence nightly to create habit loops.
- Anchor your day with "sleep-promoting" habits–such as morning light, consistent meals, and afternoon movement.

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Simple strategies for *better sleep*

Set a wake-up anchor
Wake at the same time each day to strengthen your circadian rhythm.

Morning sunlight
Get 15–30 minutes of natural light within 30 minutes of waking

Evening routine
Use warm light, avoid screens, and wind down with a short ritual (stretching, breathing, journaling).

Bedroom setup
Keep it cool (~65°F), dark, and quiet. Consider blackout curtains and white noise.

Breathing practice
Try the 4-7-8 technique or simple belly breathing for 60 seconds before bed.

Food timing
Finish large meals 3 hours before bed. A small snack (like half a banana with almond butter) can help if you wake hungry.

Mindfulness practice
Meditation or “urge surfing” helps calm your mind. Apps and short guided practices can assist.

Movement during day
Regular exercise, especially in daylight, improves sleep depth. Avoid intense workouts close to bedtime.

Bonus tools

- **Sleep Tracking:** Use a wearable or log to track patterns. Look for regular sleep/wake times and note what improves your sleep.
- **Supplement Support:** If needed, consider magnesium glycinate, glycine, or low-dose melatonin, with professional guidance.
- **Stress Reset:** Try 1-minute deep breathing during transitions or after work. Consider nature time, cold exposure, or journaling for deeper resets.

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Remember

Sleep hygiene is about creating a rhythm and environment that makes it easy to rest. Start small—choose 1 or 2 things from this guide to focus on this week. **You can build from there.**

You have more power over your sleep than you think. Small consistent actions lead to better nights and brighter days.

We are here to support you *every step of the way!*

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