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Sleep Hygiene:

7-9 hours per night is what is recommended by most sleep experts for adults, ages 18 - 64. Older people do better on a little less, 7 – 8 hours/night. Make getting proper sleep a priority. It is important to recognize the necessity of sleep and not consider it to be a luxury.

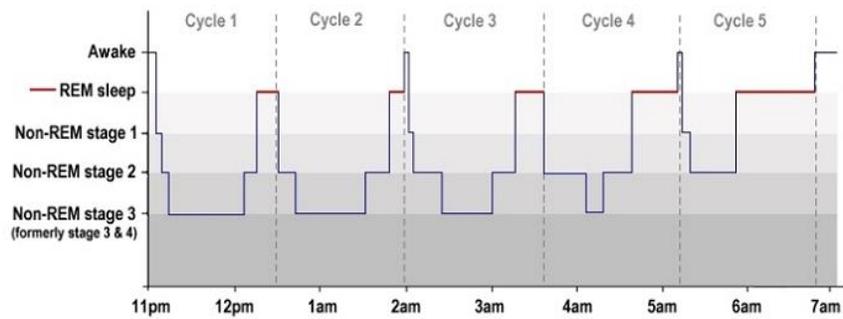
Why we need adequate sleep:

- Better concentration/memory
- Body repair & growth
- Hormonal balance (need rhythm)
- Heart health (blood pressure, cholesterol)
- May help prevent cancers
- Reduces stress
- May help with fat loss (people who sleep less than seven hours per night are more likely to be overweight or obese)
- May reduce the risk of depression

Naps help - a lower risk for dying from heart disease. People who nap at work have much lower levels of stress. Napping also improves memory, cognitive function and mood.

Tips for improving sleep:

- Daily exercise
 - Daily meditation/relaxation
 - Daily exposure to natural light sources
 - Avoid naps late in afternoon if unable to sleep at night
 - Avoid alcohol 3-4 hours before bed
 - Limit caffeine during day. Have an early afternoon cutoff time.
 - Cigarette smoking interferes with sleep
 - Comfortable bed/pillows
 - Reduce noise or add white noise
 - Dark at night/light in the AM
 - Use bed only for sleep and sex
 - Keep bedroom temperature on cool side
 - Have a set bed time and waking time that you maintain, even on weekends
 - Exposure to the frequency of light emitted by your TV, phone or computer monitor may stimulate wakefulness. Better to read something printed on paper prior to bedtime. Turn off your devices at least one hour before bedtime.
 - Eliminate as many sources of light from your visual field (turn alarm clock away from you, mask LED from TV, radio, phone, etc.)
 - Create a bedtime ritual. e.g. changing clothes, personal hygiene, set alarms, read, etc.
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The stages of sleep

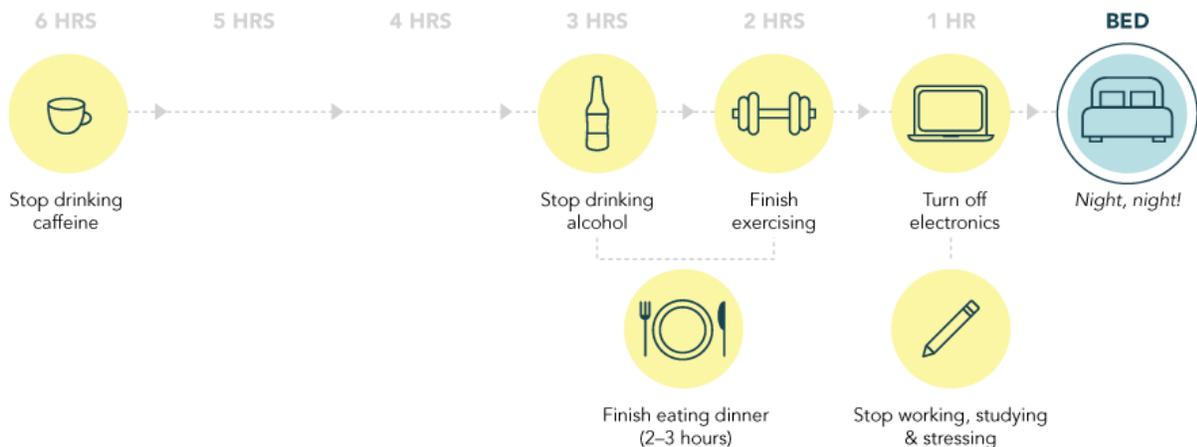
Sleep Technique:

1. Having completed your bedtime ritual, lie in bed and close your eyes.
2. Breathe deeply and, in a calm, soothing voice, say to yourself, "The day is over. I have accomplished as much as I am going to accomplish for today. Anything that has not been accomplished will be taken care of at another time. Now is the time for sleep, deep restful sleep."
3. Remain still and give yourself the chance to fall asleep. Observe the signs of sleepiness in your body.
4. Assume you are in Stage 1 sleep. We can be in Stage 1 sleep and think that we are awake. If we assume we are in Stage 1 sleep and lie still, we give ourselves the chance to go into deeper stages of sleep.
5. If thoughts begin to intrude, take another deep breath and calmly repeat, "Now is the time for sleep, deep restful sleep."
6. Repeat this process and act as if you are sleeping. Allowing yourself to become agitated and frustrated will only prevent deeper sleep.
7. Should you awaken during the night, stay calm and repeat the process.
8. This process will require practice. Stick with it. It works.

The Perfect Night's Sleep Starts Long Before You Get Into Bed

Searching for the ever-elusive perfect night's sleep? Prevent sleep sabotage by sticking to this pre-bedtime timeline.

HOURS BEFORE BED ►



Sources: National Sleep Foundation, Michael A. Grandner, Ph.D., WebMD