

Eleven Rules for Better Sleep Hygiene

1. Sleep as much as needed to feel refreshed and healthy during the following day, but not more. Curtailing the time in bed seems to solidify sleep; excessively long times in bed seem related to fragmented and shallow sleep.
2. A regular arousal time in the morning strengthens circadian cycling and, finally, lead to regular times of onset.
3. A steady daily amount of exercise probably deepens sleep; occasional exercise does not necessarily improve sleep the following night.
4. Occasional loud noises (e.g., aircraft flyovers) disturb sleep even in people who are not awakened by noises and cannot remember them in the morning. Sound-attenuated bedrooms may help those who must sleep close to noise.
5. Although excessively warm rooms disturb sleep, there is no evidence that an excessively cold room solidifies sleep.
6. Hunger may disturb sleep; a light snack may help sleep.
7. An occasional sleeping pill may be of some benefit, but their chronic use is ineffective in most insomniacs.
8. Caffeine in the evening disturbs sleep, even in those who feel it does not.
9. Alcohol helps tense people fall asleep more easily, but the ensuing sleep is then fragmented.
10. People who feel angry and frustrated because they cannot sleep should not try harder and harder to fall asleep but should turn on the light and do something different.
11. The chronic use of tobacco disturbs sleep.