



SYNERGY

Physical Therapy and Yoga Inc.

Recommendations for improving sleep:

1. Sleep in comfortable clothing or naked if night clothes tend to become uncomfortable
2. Open window (if not too noisy outside). Some researchers feel that the perfect temperature for sleeping is around 68 degrees Fahrenheit.
3. Darken room if ambient light is an issue, i.e. street lights, full moon. You can purchase some dark shades or curtains. Having a dark room is necessary to optimize melatonin output.
4. Go to sleep before 10 pm and if tired go to bed earlier.
5. Go to bed and awaken at the same time each day, even on weekends. This helps to reinforce the sleep-wake cycle.
6. Have a bedtime routine that involves a relaxing activity that signals to your body that you are getting ready for sleep:
 - a. *Shower*
 - b. *Bath*
 - c. *Reading a book*
 - d. *Listening to relaxing music*
7. Do not consume caffeinated, i.e. coffee, tea, ice tea, beverages in the evening. Best to reduce caffeine altogether, but definitely avoid after 2 to 3 pm in the afternoon.
8. Herbal teas such as Chamomile and other sleep-promoting teas are okay in the evening.
9. Turn off computers, TV, video games other visually oriented electronics before 8 pm at night. If at all possible, do not engage in work that is mentally trying or stressful after 8 pm. This will allow for a more peaceful transition to bedtime. If you enjoy watching TV in the evening, avoid disturbing images or emotionally charged programs. Consider wearing blue-blocker glasses to reduce exposure to stimulating blue light from the TV screen.
10. No strenuous exercise, i.e. cardio, weights, power yoga in the evening after dinner.
11. Remove nightlights and other electronics from room. If must have, then keep cellphone or Ipad/tablet at least 10 feet from bed to help reduce electromagnetic field (EMF) emissions.

12. If you cannot fall asleep, then get up and do something else such as meditating and/or deep breathing exercises. Mentally recite a prayer or mantra if worried about something and your mind cannot relax. Keep a notepad next to your bed to write down thoughts about things you may need to do the next day. This allows you to release it from your mind without worrying that you will forget it tomorrow.
13. Keep in mind that the stressors of the day can often seem amplified at night while we are lying in the dark perseverating on the day's events. Let them go – nothing will be resolved during night and will only make tomorrow more difficult for the lack of sleep. Things often seem clearer and less stressful in the morning after a good night's sleep anyway.

Rest and Recovery:

1. It is important to take time to play and do the things in life that bring us joy. This is one of the best and most rewarding ways of reducing stress. Make a list of the things you like to do that bring joy into your life. Some things may take ten minutes like walking the dog or some things may take all day like going for a hike. Some of these experiences may occur over a weekend or require a week-long vacation. Choose to incorporate these joyful experiences throughout the day, week, month and year. Having something to look forward to, relieves the stress of the daily grind that can be so much a part of our lives.
2. We all must balance work with recovery. Taking the opportunity to get adequate sleep is one of the most important things we can do for ourselves.
3. Spending time outdoors in nature is a great way to recharge our batteries. Seek it out and do it often.
4. Whenever possible, get some sun on your body to increase vitamin D production and improve mood. 15-20 minutes in the morning or afternoon sun without sunscreen is preferred. Sunscreen blocks the UVB rays so that your skin does not burn but UVB rays are also needed to produce vitamin D. Mindful sun exposure early in the day without sunscreen can support vitamin D production without getting sunburned. Be aware of your own limits – some people can be in the direct sun for 20 minutes while others can only tolerate 10 minutes.
5. An afternoon nap or resting quietly is certainly acceptable if possible. Sometimes just sitting quietly away from the TV or computer can help relieve stress.