

## FACT SHEET: SLEEP HYGIENE

### KEY FACTS

- Maintaining regular wake and sleep times even on weekends promotes a healthy lifestyle.
- Exercise regularly to promote sleepiness and proper health.
- Avoiding naps, stimulants, alcohol and mental stressors before bedtime helps promote quality sleep.
- Remove TVs, computers, cell phones and other environmental disturbances from your sleeping environment.

### Q: WHAT IS SLEEP HYGIENE?

**A:** Sleep Hygiene is a variety of different practices to promote quality nighttime sleep and daytime alertness. It can be affected by a variety of different factors.

### Q: WHAT IS GOOD SLEEP HYGIENE?

**A:** Maintaining a regular sleep and wake schedule seven days a week, and allowing for a sufficient amount of time in bed. Typically, most adults require 7-9 hours of sleep each night.

### Q: WHAT CAN BE DONE TO PROMOTE GOOD SLEEP HYGIENE?

- Avoid napping during the day, which can disrupt the normal sleep schedule and delay your usual bedtime.
- Avoid stimulants such as caffeine (chocolate, tea, coffee, etc.) and nicotine and/or tobacco products before bedtime.
- Maintain a relaxing sleep environment which should not include televisions, computers or iPADS.
- Avoid alcohol before bedtime.
- Exercise regularly, but try to avoid strenuous exercise at night. It is okay to engage in relaxing exercises such as yoga or stretching in the evening.
- Avoid large meals before bedtime.
- Use blackout curtains or an eye mask if the bedroom is not sufficiently dark.
- If sleep is disturbed by outside noises, a white noise machine or earplugs may be beneficial.
- Maintain a cool temperature in the bedroom. The bedroom environ-

ment should be neither hot or cold, but personal preferences will vary on the ideal room temperature.

### Q: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO PRACTICE GOOD SLEEP HYGIENE?

**A:** Good sleep hygiene promotes healthy sleep a night and alertness during the day. It can also help in preventing development of some sleep disorders.

### Q: HOW DO I KNOW IF I HAVE POOR SLEEP HYGIENE?

**A:** Maintaining an abnormal sleep/wake schedule is a good indicator of poor sleep hygiene. Every effort should be made to go to bed and get up at the same time each day, even on weekends.

### Q: HOW DO I DETERMINE WHAT THE BEST SLEEP HYGIENE ROUTINE IS FOR ME?

**A:** Make sure that you do not linger in bed tossing and turning if you are not able to fall asleep easily. If you are not able to fall asleep within 20 minutes after going to bed or if you are having long awakenings during the night, consider revising your sleep schedule. For example, if you are having trouble falling asleep, try going to bed later and do not go to bed until you are sleepy.

### FURTHER READING

1. National Sleep Foundation - [www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org)
2. American Academy of Sleep Medicine - [www.aasmnet.org](http://www.aasmnet.org)