

Top 10 Steps to a Good Night's Rest

(“Sleep hygiene techniques”)

Insomnia is a mind game – win it by employing any or all of the following strategies that you need; if needed, take a sleep aid.

Seek medical care if chronic, or if you have any other concerning symptoms; you may need a sleep study or referral.

1. Breathe slowly and methodically, mimicking how you think you might breathe while you are sleeping. While doing that, relax every muscle in your body; make every part of your body heavy, melting into the bed. Good night. Do not stress about not being able to fall asleep (a little counterproductive, wouldn't you think?) – enjoy the peace and quiet, and realize you are getting some benefit by relaxing and resting your eyes and body. Although sleep is important, if you sleep poorly one night, don't stress about it the next day – simply go about your usual activities and you will likely sleep better the next night (and do your best NOT to take a nap during the day!)
2. Use a mental distraction technique to slow your racing mind and/or lull your brain to sleep. Consider counting backwards from 100, but go two down & one back up (100, 99, 98; 99, 98, 97; 98, 97, 96; 97, 96, 95; etc.). Or, tell yourself a story with you in it (one that you make up is best).
3. Try to make your room pitch black by getting rid of ambient light.
4. You may find it helpful to intentionally try to keep eyes open (but ***never look at the clock***, especially if you wake up early or in the middle of the night!).
5. Create some white noise like turning on a fan.
6. Read something, or listen to a podcast or music (*something that is conducive to sleep*).
7. Make the room temperature comfortable.
8. Stretch your calves and/or other muscle groups.
9. Take a hot bubble bath.
10. Treat any medical conditions present (e.g., pain, anxiety, restless legs syndrome).