



I sleep longer... but I'm still tired.

The light of screens, the overload of duties, a stressful lifestyle - all of these affect the quality of our sleep. Although it may seem that longer hours of sleep automatically mean better rest, the reality is often different. So why, despite spending more time in bed, do we still wake up tired? The answer often lies in the secrets of sleep hygiene.

Sleep hygiene is a certain norm, based on a series of recommendations that can improve the quality and duration of sleep by changing our habits, behaviors, and environmental conditions.

How to take care of good sleep?

- **Regular sleep schedule:**

Creating a consistent sleep schedule is a key step in improving its quality. The body likes routine, so try to go to bed and wake up at the same times every day, even on weekends. This will help regulate your biological clock and improve the quality of sleep.

- **Eliminate screens before bedtime:**

The glare of computer screens, smartphones, and televisions can disrupt the production of melatonin, the hormone that regulates sleep. Try to limit the use of electronic devices at least an hour before bedtime. Instead, reach for a book, something to listen to, or relaxing music.



- **Outdoor activity:**

A very important element of proper sleep hygiene is physical activity. It doesn't have to be a series of intense exercises. It's important that it's regular and, if possible, takes place outdoors - a walk, yoga, or even gardening can have a beneficial impact on the quality of our sleep. The best time to fulfill this recommendation is in the afternoon or early evening.

- **Stimulants and substances:**

Avoid caffeine before bedtime, including coffee, energy drinks, and tea, due to their impact on sleep even up to 12 hours after consumption. Also, avoid smoking cigarettes before bedtime. Alcohol, despite its seemingly positive impact on falling asleep, actually worsens the quality of sleep, leading to shallowness, interruptions, and earlier waking, resulting in feelings of fatigue and lack of regeneration.

- **Bed as a sleep place:**

Researchers suggest treating the bed solely as a place for sleep and sexual activity. Therefore, avoid doing other activities - eating, watching TV, or reading in bed. Moreover, after waking up, it is recommended not to prolong staying in bed.



- **Appropriate body and room temperature:**

Even though the temperature of our body, although an approximate value of 36.6 degrees Celsius, has its own circadian rhythm and peaks in the evening around 6:00 PM. From this time until going to bed, it should slightly decrease. Therefore, it is not recommended to take warm baths, consume hot meals, or drinks. The optimal room temperature should be between approximately 18 to 22°C.

- **Quiet and relaxation:**

Before going to bed, the body should calm down. Therefore, it's worth abandoning physical and mental activity about 2 hours before sleep. Various methods can help with relaxation - calm, soothing music, sounds of nature, or appropriately tuned noise, meditation, breathing exercises, aromatherapy. It's also important to do everything to avoid thinking about upcoming responsibilities or problems we're dealing with (it's worth addressing them earlier).



- **Food and sleep:**

Before bedtime, we should not consume too hot, spicy, sweet, or heavy meals, as this will force our digestive system to work harder when we are already asleep. However, it is not advisable to start the process of falling asleep feeling hungry, so it is recommended to eat a carbohydrate snack, such as hard-boiled eggs, cottage cheese, rice cakes, and magnesium-rich foods such as nuts, black beans, or broccoli. It is also important that meals throughout the day are regular and properly balanced.

I lie in bed and can't fall asleep...

Getting a good night's sleep usually happens when three things align: your body is calling for some shut-eye, your internal clock says it's bedtime, and you're feeling pretty chill.

When drifting off becomes a struggle, it's a no-go trying to force it. Only hop into bed and stick around if you're actually feeling the Sandman's vibe. Resist the urge to push yourself into an earlier bedtime, make up for a previous night's sleep shortage, or attempt to bank some extra z's.

If you can't fall asleep and feel agitated, it's better to leave the bed. Every minute spent in bed at night lying and awake seems to double. After 2 hours of staying awake, the feeling is as if you haven't slept for 4 hours.

Prolonged lying in bed waiting for sleep is often more responsible for feeling tired the next day than actual lack of sleep.

In bed, no work- or school-related activities should be performed. Other daily activities, such as eating, watching TV, or talking on the phone, should also be separated from the bedroom. It's better not to engage in emotionally or physically stimulating activities in the evening.

If you are forced to work longer in the evening or have experienced something unpleasant, it is advisable to delay the moment of going to bed.

And hey, if sleep struggles persist, it's worth reaching out to a doctor or a mental health specialist, like a therapist. They can offer some expert advice and support.

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Looking for assistance? Don't forget that Hearme is here for you, and our team of specialists is ready to provide the help you need.

