

PEARLS TO Prevent Insomnia



If you're struggling to fall asleep, stay asleep, or get enough sleep, you might want to try changing your relationship to sleep. Thinking differently about sleep and preparing for it as if it were a wonderful and healing part of your day can change everything! For those of you who snore or have sleep apnea, get tested and treated by your doctor as soon as possible. You might need an overnight sleep study done in a sleep lab.

QUANTITY:

Get good sleep

Ideally, you want 7-9 hours of good sleep per night.

ROUTINE:

Sleep & wake at the same time

Go to sleep & wake up at the same time each day. The best time to go to bed is between 10-11pm.

MORNING SUNLIGHT:

Enjoy the morning sun

Get exposure to sunlight first thing in the morning! *(This triggers the brain to release chemicals / hormones like melatonin that help with sleep and mood.)*

EXERCISE:

Move your body

Get 30 minutes of physical exercise prior to dinner. *(You don't want to increase metabolism just prior to sleep.)*

FOOD:

Feed your body

Eat dinner at least 3 hours prior to sleep. *(This way, you have a chance to metabolize/digest food before sleeping.)*

REDUCE STIMULATION:

Give your brain a break

Avoid stimulating activity 2 hours before bed. *(eg: watching TV, surfing the internet, answering emails)*

AVOID THESE SUBSTANCES

The following interfere with sleep

- Alcohol, caffeine, sugar
- Antihistamines
- Stimulants (e.g.: Ritalin)
- Steroids (e.g.: Prednisone)
- Headache medication (e.g.: Fioricet has caffeine)
- Cold medications (containing pseudoephedrine, phenylephrine)
- Sedatives (initially used to treat insomnia, but eventually can lead to dependence and disruption of normal sleep rhythms)

RELAX YOUR BODY

Take a warm bath with:

- (1) cup epsom salt (has magnesium to relax your muscles)
- (1) cup baking soda (alkalizes your system)
- (10) drops of lavender essential oils (reduces cortisol levels)

CLEAN YOUR ENVIRONMENT

- Keep bedroom dark or use eye cover
- Use ear plugs to block out sound (soft silicone)
- Make sure you have a comfortable temperature
- Create an aesthetic, spa-like environment that promotes rest (reduce clutter)
- Turn electronics off
- Keep electronics charging away from your nightstand)

CLEAR YOUR MIND

- Keep a journal and pen next to your bed.
- Plan for the next day and reduce your anxiety for the morning.
- Write down your worries, so you can come back to them at a later time.
- Use restful music or a guided imagery recording to help you relax your mind and body.
- Write (3) things you're grateful for, so your mind is reflecting on positive events of the day.

NOTES
