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10 Tips For Better Sleep

By Wendy Ann Owen

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by: **Wendy Ann Owen**

We all need some help now and then in getting to sleep. Rather than just popping a pill which can be habit forming and lead to more sleep problems in the long term, try these sleeping tips. One or more of them will surely help.

Have a hot bath

Not hot enough to make you uncomfortable though. The heat of the water relaxes the muscles and also causes the core body temperature to drop afterwards which sends a sleep signal to the brain. This is great for children too. It only works for baths though, not showers!

Get more light during the day

This sounds strange, but its vital for good sleep at night. Our brains are hard wired to go to sleep when it's dark and wake when its light. Not getting enough light during the day will deprogram our biological clock. Once our circadian rhythm has been upset, our brain won't receive the sleep signal when we're ready to go to sleep.

Even if you are working long hours try to get outside into the sunshine for a while at lunchtime. If you live in a part of the world which has short days in winter, install a bright light at home and sit under it for at least 30 minutes. This should be enough to keep that biological clock ticking!

This is a good reason not to watch TV in bed. Even if the program is dull, the bright flickering light of the TV screen will be working against your natural sleep patterns!

Don't lie in bed and worry about not sleeping

10 Tips For Better Sleep

This will only cause stress and make sleep even harder to achieve. If you find yourself becoming concerned about not sleeping, get up and make yourself a drink (not coffee!) Find something to read. Stay up until you feel sleepy again and only then go back to bed.

Go to bed at the same time every night and get up at the same time every morning.

This reinforces the natural biological rhythm and helps your brain send a sleep signal. It also reinforces a habit. Habits are an important part of better sleep. Obviously you won't be able to do this every single night, there will be nights where you might go out to a show or out on the town with friends! However if you manage most nights, this will still work well.

Don't go to bed until you are tired.

Yes I know! This sound like a direct contradiction of the previous tip! The logic behind this is that is you are not sleepy you will lie in bed awake and will start worrying about not being able to go to sleep. The

most important part of all this is to get up at the same time every morning no matter what time you went to bed the night before. Eventually you will feel very sleepy at your normal bedtime. Getting up in the morning when you are still tired is not easy to do but it will help in the longer term. Stick with it!

Keep a sleep diary

This, while rather tedious, will give you an excellent idea of your sleep patterns and will be a necessary record if you ever decide to visit a sleep clinic for help. Some people have done this and found their sleeping problems disappeared of their own accord! A sleep diary should note the following:

What you had for dinner

What drinks you consumed after dinner

Any naps taken during the day

What time you went to bed

How long it took you to fall asleep

If you woke during the night

What time you woke up in the morning

How you rated quality of sleep (1–10)

Any further observations

Do this every days for a few weeks and you should see a pattern emerging. This will give you

10 Tips For Better Sleep

invaluable information on your personal sleep habits and patterns.

Develop an evening ritual.

Do the same things at the same time each night. This programs the unconscious mind that you are preparing for sleep. Brush your teeth, put the cat out, check the locks on the doors. Do each step in the same order. It may sound simplistic but it can work really well.

Exercise more during the day.

Exercise relaxes the body and mind as well as being good for your health and helping with weight loss. Even walking just 30 minutes a day will help. If walking's not your thing try Yoga or Qigong. Both are soothing and will relax you totally. If there are no classes near you, videos or CDs are easily available.

Practice muscle relaxation.

You can do this during the day or after going to bed. Practice tensing and relaxing each muscle group in turn, starting at the top of the head and gradually working down to the toes. This relaxes the body and also distracts you from any worrying thoughts while you are performing it. Visit the page on relaxation techniques for some easy to follow techniques.

Write down worries before going to bed.

There's always something to worry about isn't there? These are the things that can keep you awake when your mind won't let go. Solution? Have a worry time before going to bed. Think of all the problems that are currently in your life and write them down. Make a decision to do something about them the following day.

If you are tempted to think about any of those things while you are trying to sleep simply tell yourself, "its ok, I've made a note of it and I'll handle it tomorrow"

Sweet dreams!

Want to know how to have better sleep? Find out how. Check out

your resource for detailed information on sleep and curing stress. The author, Wendy Owen, has had a lifetime interest in general and alternative health as well as being an ex insomniac!

Baby Sleep Tips – Feeding During The Day

By Brandon C. Hall

Every parent of a newborn will inevitably deal with many sleepless nights. Babies, of course, have many needs, and when they awake in the night they will cry for their mothers. One of your most

10 Tips For Better Sleep

important tasks as a parent is to establish good sleeping habits in your child. Every baby must go through a transition where he adjusts from sleeping with his mother to sleeping on his own. This is a natural transition of course, and takes some time, but there are things you can do to expedite the process. Not only will this help your child develop better sleep habits, it will allow you to get some much needed rest.

Many baby sleep tips exist, and every parent would be well advised to research many different baby sleep tips. It is important to keep in mind, however, that no baby sleep tip should be considered hard and fast rules. As a parent, your instincts know best, and when you are in doubt in regards to baby sleep tips remind yourself of this fact. Many first time parents experience insecurity in terms of whether their decisions and strategies are correct, and while you shouldn't be uninformed, you should always view baby sleep tips through the lens of your own parental instincts.

Now, one thing you should consider when trying to get your newborn to sleep better at night is what his feeding habits are. Oftentimes the child will be active and otherwise busy during the day, and won't be doing a lot of feeding. The problem with this, of course, is that he will then wake you repeatedly thought the night for feedings. A good technique, then, for getting your baby to sleep better at night is to "tank up" during the day. Try feeding every three hours during the day. This will not only ensure that you child's appetite is satisfied for the night, but will create an important association: you want your child to associate feeding with the daytime. If your child does wake up in the night for a feeding, try to get him to do one full feeding the first time he wakes up. If you don't do this, you encourage him to "snack" throughout the night – i.e. wake you up every couple hours.

Again, it is important to understand these baby feeding tips should not be taken as hard and fast rules, but rather as guidance. In a general way, you want to create both daytime and sleep associations for your child. You want him to associate feeding and play with something that happens during the day, and lullabies and baths as something that happens at night, before bed. By doing this you ease the transition between sleep and wakefulness, which is the ultimate goal in terms of putting your child to bed easily. If, however, your child doesn't want to feed every three hours, don't force him. Similarly, don't force a full feeding when you wake him at night. Rather, think of the bigger picture: by creating general habits and associations for your child, you will ensure a hasty and healthy sleep development.

Brandon C. Hall maintains [Free Info Blog](#)

which contains many articles

and resources on baby sleep

tips as well as

many other topics.

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