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5 Keys to Better Sleep

By Patricia Wagner

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by: **Patricia Wagner**

Do you have trouble getting a good night's sleep?

What you are about to read may make a huge difference to your future health! Being well rested is essential to our wellbeing and is a major key in living an energetic lifestyle.

Here are some of the benefits of a good night's sleep: – You will look and feel your best. – Relating to others will come easier with enough rest. – You'll be a safer driver and be less likely to fall asleep at the wheel. – More alertness and creativity on the job will be a major benefit. – You'll feel less stressed. – There'll be an increased ability to fight off illness. – You'll enjoy life more.

Here are some keys to getting a better night's sleep:

1. Set your body clock.

Choose a bedtime schedule by deciding how many hours of shut-eye you need and try to stick with it. That's because we are all creatures of habit.

Try not to oversleep too often because this tends to throw your body clock off. If you are tired, try taking a short nap. However, it should not be longer than about one half an hour because more time than that and you will wind up not being able to fall asleep that night.

2. Be wise about eating and drinking.

Drinking too much fluid in the late afternoon and evening can cause you to wake up in the middle of the night to trot off to the bathroom. Also consuming food and beverages that contain caffeine before bedtime can cause you to toss and turn for hours. So it would be wise to avoid coffee, tea, soft drinks and chocolate before going to bed. However, a hot non-caffeinated drink can relax you.

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3. Prepare your sleeping environment.

You have control over a number of factors in your sleeping environment that will make or break a good night's sleep.

One of them is the temperature of your bedroom. Adjust the temperature of your bedroom so it's conducive to sleeping. It's usually best to have your room a little on the cool side, but be sure you have enough blankets on your bed.

Another environmental issue is the darkness of our bedrooms. Many people prefer sleeping when it's totally dark, so turn off the lights except for night lights.

A key bedroom environment factor is your bed. Purchase the best mattress you can afford since you'll spend a large proportion of your life on it.

Quietness is very important to our rest. Try to keep the noise down. If that's impossible, consider using ear plugs. Play calming music and avoid watching television just before bedtime. Violent scenes can lead to sleeplessness and violent dreams!

Design your bedroom to be a peaceful sanctuary in your home. Separate your work from the bedroom area so your body knows the bedroom is a place to rest – not work.

4. Prepare yourself physically, emotionally and spiritually for bedtime.

There are a number of steps you can take before going to bed to prepare yourself physically. Slowly stretching before hitting the sack can help you relax. Regular exercise during the day will enhance your ability to fall asleep. Taking a warm bath – not a shower – can be helpful too. If you are still tense, a back massage can help you relax. Wear comfortable nonbinding clothing.

Here's the most important thing you can do once you've hit the sack – let go of the day's worries. Bedtime is a bad time to dwell on problems since worry can keep you tossing and turning for hours! I've found that reading the Bible and praying before going to bed is a wonderful way to end the day. Then I can truly relax and lay down my problems. My sleep is much sweeter and so are my dreams!

5. Seek specialized help if needed.

A medical condition could be preventing you from getting your full rest at night. See your doctor if you have continuing difficulty with falling asleep. Usually it's not wise to take sleeping pills since they can become addictive. They also interfere with the body's own inner sleeping rhythm.

Here are three organizations that offer specialized help:

National Sleep Foundation

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine

National Center on Sleep Disorders Research

The suggestions in this article have been listed to help you get a better night's sleep. Now try putting them into practice and enjoy a more rested and energetic lifestyle.

Pleasant dreams!

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Patricia Wagner offers informative tips on living a more energetic lifestyle at
and through her free "A to Z Health Tips" newsletter.

Email:

Taking A Vacation To The Florida Keys With Your Family Is Fun

By Kyle Greatbatch

If you are looking for some of the most beautiful and enjoyable spots in the world, you must cast your net to Florida Keys. This exotic location stretches from the South of the mainland, and in reality Florida Keys is a chain of many enchanting Islands.

Geographically, the Florida Keys consists of five major groups of Islands which are Islamorada, Marathon, Lower Keys, and Key West. All these areas are collectively known as Key Largo.

If you are game in this adventure, then the journey commences from Miami, which is only a short distance from the city of Key Largo. This city provides a more relaxed atmosphere, and is a welcomed relief away from the hustle and bustle of daily life. Florida Keys is just completely different from any one you've ever known.

But your stay should not be restricted to just the Key Largo, you need to explore the complete "keys" which is about 160 miles from Miami. However, every mile you cover takes you close to paradise. No place can really compare to Florida Keys in the world.

Hawaii and the Bahamas have been hyped as the best tropical resorts, but I make bold to say that nothing can be farther from the truth. Florida Keys as a vacation spot offer practically everything you might need; a good night life, and if you like secluded beaches, they don't come much better than those at Islamorada or Marathon Islands. And talking of costs, Florida Keys provides a wide range of lodgings and private homes for rent.

For those with luxurious tastes, the Florida Keys boasts of several five–star lodgings that can match even the requirements of kings. Folks who prefer austere accommodations, there are several rustic

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lodgings in Florida Keys. However, it is needles to remind you that the best places outdoor in Florida Keys remain its lovely beaches. The coast line is very vast because the Island is bordered on the east by the Atlantic Ocean and on the western tip by the Gulf of Mexico.

Sporting facilities and activities abound in the Florida Keys for adventurous people. Fishing, diving, and swimming are the most common activities, probably due to the pristine waters of the Florida Keys.

Besides sporting activities, there are other interesting sights in Florida Keys. Each community in this Island seems to have its cultural events that families can enjoy. Several artists and artisans domiciled in the Island have also made Florida Keys a renowned place. Thus no matter what your interest is, there is always something for everyone.

The variety of experiences that abounds is the best thing about Florida Keys, strictly from a vacationer's point of view. And judging by the influx of holiday makers into the Island, one would think the whole area is on vacation throughout the year. This independence in Florida Keys that surely comes from being very far from the big cities, which probably explains why residents of Florida Keys refer to their Island as the 51st state in the Union.

When you visit Florida Keys, the only problem you might encounter is the dilemma of whether to return back home! Because Florida Keys is a very magical place.

Article written by Kyle Greatbatch

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