# SLEEP HYGIENE

Sleep Hygiene is behaviors that are conducive to promoting healthier sleeping patterns on a consistent basis. Sleep is vital for your body to repair itself and reenergize for upcoming tasks.

## What to DO:

**Establish a Sleeping Environment**
A dark, quiet room with a comfortable bed. Refrain from having pets sleep with you as they can disturb your sleep cycle. Use your bed only for sleep or sexual intimacy.

**Relaxation Training**
The more relaxed you are the better your sleep will be.

**Sleep Rituals**
Do the same thing before bed. This helps communicate with your body it is about to sleep. Reduce mental & physical activity at least 30-minutes before bedtime.

  - **Examples:** Slow, easy stretching. Listening to calming music.

**Sleep when Sleepy**
Go to sleep when you are tired. If you cannot fall asleep within 20-minutes, get up and do a non-stimulating, tedious task.

**Establish a Consistent Routine**
Try to go to sleep and awaken at the same time every day, including days off/weekends. This helps your body develop a consistent sleeping pattern.

**Exercise**
Daily exercise can exhaust your body and aid falling asleep.

## What to Avoid:

**Naps**
Napping can alter sleep cycles, making it harder to fall asleep. If a nap is necessary then do so at least 6-hours before your typical bedtime. Keep naps shorter than 20-minutes to help prevent interfering with your sleep cycles.

**Caffeine**
Caffeine is a natural stimulate that makes falling asleep more difficult. Do not consume caffeine within 6-hours before your typical bedtime. Look at ingredients before consuming food/beverages.

**Bright Lights**
Bright lights (especially LED lights emitted by cell phones) stimulate your brain to wake up. Turn your phone off or keep in another room.

**Nicotine**
Nicotine reduces your time in each sleep cycle which shortens your total duration of sleep.

**Minimize Alcohol Consumption**
Alcohol consumption can alter sleep cycles. Alcohol disrupts the quality of sleep by preventing you from entering into the deepest stage of sleep.

**Snacking**
Eating late at night can impact your ability to fall asleep.