Top tips for a good night's sleep

1. Make sleep a priority

Set a bedtime and stick to it. You can't get good sleep if you're not in bed!

- Work out the amount of sleep you need to feel rested and refreshed (usually between 7-9hrs for adults).
- Work out when you need to wake up in the morning.
- Count back from your wake up time, add 30 mins and that's your bed time. The extra half hour allows time to get to sleep.
- Set yourself a "go to bed" alarm 60 mins before this so you have plenty of time to wind down and be "sleep ready".

2. Optimise your sleep environment

Create an environment that supports deep, refreshing sleep
- Darkness: window coverings, lights from clocks, standby lights or use a sleep mask
- Temperature: Aim for between 19-21 degrees. Things to consider are air temperature, mattress fabric, bed linen and PJs.
- Noise: Try to eliminate or reduce environmental noise if possible. Fans and white noise generators can be helpful.
- Distractions: media devices, pets and clutter can all be distracting. Try to keep the bedroom just for sleeping and sex!

3. Wind down for the day

Give your nervous system a chance to transition from active to relaxed.

Use the hour before bed to unwind. Ideas include: listening to relaxing music, reading a book, taking a warm bath, drinking a cup of herbal tea, meditation, relaxation breathing, gentle stretching or journaling.

4. Turn off the screens & dim the lights

Bright light delays the release of melatonin, a hormone needed for sleep. The content on the screens also stimulates excitatory neurotransmitters in your brain. At least an hour before bed switch off the screens and dim the lights / switch to lamplight.
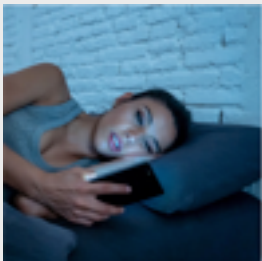
5. Don't eat and sleep

In order to go to sleep your core body temperature needs to drop slightly. Eating raises your core body temperature. Leave at least 2, but ideally 3 hours between your last bite and bedtime. Yes, that includes any after dinner snacks!

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