

Lifestyle Tips



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Exercise and Sleep

Do you want to be productive, mentally sharp, emotionally balanced, and full of energy all day long? How well and how long you sleep during the night greatly impacts how you feel during the day. We are all aware of how important it is for us to get 8 hours of sleep a night. However, in addition to quantity, quality is also an important factor in getting a restful sleep. Good sleep is an important function that benefits both the body and mind.

The good news is that the key to a good night's sleep maybe as simple as getting more exercise. Recent studies indicate that moderate amounts of exercise is very important in improving sleep quantity and quality. As a non-pharmacological intervention, exercise is one of the most recommended forms of treatment for sleep problems¹. All forms of physical activity, including cardiovascular exercise, strength training, and flexibility training may be helpful in promoting a longer and more restful sleep¹.

The following exercise tips will help you maximize your nights rest and lay the foundation for a healthier day.



- Don't overdo it. Moderate exercise is sufficient to help you sleep better at night. After a tiring day at work, you don't need to force yourself to go to the gym or run a marathon. A 30 minute brisk walk or a strength training workout is enough to help improve the quality and quantity of sleep¹.
- Don't exercise too close to bedtime. Make sure that your workout is completed at least 2-3 hours before bedtime to allow your body enough time to return to normal.
- Get in a regular exercise routine. Participating in moderate-to-vigorous exercise at least 150



minutes per week is essential for overall health and maintaining good sleep quality.

- Change it up! In addition to cardiovascular exercise, strength or flexibility training is also important in promoting better sleep. Try some weights, a yoga, or a pilates program. Strength training is essential to help your body build muscle to support the daily activities of the body. In addition to improving overall flexibility, yoga and pilates can help you learn how to breathe, relax, and feel more balanced throughout the day.
- If you find you have no time for a full 30-40 minute workout, squeeze in shorter bouts of exercise throughout the day. Take the stairs instead of the elevator or escalator, park the car further from the door, or walk or cycle to work. Shorter bouts throughout the day can help you achieve the recommended amount of physical activity for the day.

Start the day off right by getting a great night's sleep. In addition to overall health, a regular exercise routine will help to promote and optimize the quality and quantity of sleep you get at night.

References

¹ Buman, MP. & King, AC. (2010). Exercise as a Treatment to Enhance Sleep. *Am. J Lifestyle Med*, 4, 500-514.

² Gerber, M., Brand, S., Hoslboer-Trachsler, E., & Puhse, U. (2010). Fitness and Exercise as Correlates of Sleep Complaints: Is It All in Our Minds? *Med. Sci. Sports Exerc.*, Vol. 42, No. 5, pp. 893-901

