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Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

by [ChicagoHealers.com](#) Practitioner Sharon M. Weinstein

Sleep experts say most adults' need between seven and nine hours of sleep each night for optimum performance, health and safety. When we don't get adequate sleep, we accumulate a sleep debt that can be difficult to "pay back" if it becomes too big. The resulting sleep deprivation has been linked to health problems such as obesity and high blood pressure, negative mood and behavior, decreased productivity, and safety issues in the home, on the job, and on the road.

ChicagoHealers.com practitioner Sharon M. Weinstein, RN and wellness consultant offers the following tips for a good nights sleep.

The Bedroom:

- * Darkness-Your bedroom should be as dark and as quiet as possible
- * Noise Levels- If noise from the outside (or a snoring sleep partner) often wakes you, consider getting a "sound generator" that makes a quiet nature sound — a burbling brook, waves on a beach — or just static "white noise." Either will mask other sounds so they don't disturb your sleep.
- * Clean Air-Use an air cleaner if needed to keep the air fresh and clean. Bedding, drapes, and carpet are all home to dust that can aggravate allergies, which are sure to keep you awake
- * Eliminate clutter- Get rid of clutter, distractions and noise, including exercise equipment, computers, phones, and televisions.

Sleeping Strategies:

- * Body Clock-Cooperate with your body clock; circadian rhythm is a key to deep, sound sleep. The body clock function of your brain determines your times for sleep and waking by affecting your body temperature and by the daily release of certain hormones that affect alertness.
- * Light-Take advantage of your brains own sleep-inducing chemical, melatonin, and get some bright light exposure each day soon after awakening.

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This will decrease your brain's melatonin levels early in the day. With less melatonin you'll be more awake and alert. Try for 30 to 45 minutes of light exposure as early in the day as possible. In the evening, as you approach bedtime, keep room lights low so your melatonin levels will increase and help ready you for sleep.

* Prepare-You need prep time so avoid stimulating drugs, caffeine, and nicotine. Limit your fluid intake as you get close to bedtime so you won't be awakened by a need to go to the bathroom.



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- [DVD \(1\)](#)
- [Eastern philosophy \(15\)](#)
- [Environment \(4\)](#)
- [Feng Shui \(11\)](#)
- [Forbidden knowledge \(15\)](#)
- [Goddess \(15\)](#)
- [horoscopes \(73\)](#)
- [Law of Attraction \(11\)](#)
- [Meditation \(9\)](#)
- [Metaphysical \(52\)](#)
- [Music Reviews \(13\)](#)
- [Native American Spirituality \(13\)](#)
- [New Age General \(110\)](#)
- [New Age Music \(3\)](#)
- [Non-violence \(3\)](#)
- [Nutrition \(3\)](#)
- [Pagan \(23\)](#)
- [parenting \(1\)](#)
- [Personal Growth \(146\)](#)
- [prophesies \(1\)](#)
- [psychology \(1\)](#)
- [Sacred Places \(6\)](#)
- [Self help \(10\)](#)
- [Spirituality \(89\)](#)
- [Uncategorized \(1\)](#)
- [vegan \(1\)](#)
- [Wellness \(54\)](#)
- [Yoga \(5\)](#)

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