



Sleep Hygiene Principles

The normal sleep cycle lasts about 90 minutes during which the body drifts through stages of light and very deep sleep. The cycle includes quiet sleep and active sleep. During quiet sleep, breathing, heartbeat, and brain waves slow down.

During active sleep, breathing, heartbeat, and brain waves become faster. When someone has problems falling asleep, the normal sleep pattern is disturbed. Most people need about six to nine hours of sleep each night.

The following sleep hygiene principles may help to relieve fatigue caused by lack of sleep.

- ✦ Reduce the amount of light and noise
- ✦ Keep bedroom temperature comfortable
- ✦ Go to sleep and wake up the same time each day
- ✦ Exercise (walking, stretching) at least 4-6 hours before bedtime
- ✦ Avoid eating heavy meals before going to bed
- ✦ Avoid going to bed hungry--this may disrupt sleep
- ✦ Avoid caffeine, nicotine and other stimulants, as well as depressants, such as alcohol, before bedtime
- ✦ Take a warm bath
- ✦ Listen to quiet music
- ✦ Try relaxation exercises, such as deep breathing
- ✦ Anyone who experiences sleep disruption for more than a month should consult a physician