

The below sleep hygiene recommendations were prepared in consultation with [Dr. Katie Angelova, MD](#), Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry Division, Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai. Dr. Angelova uses the following guidelines developed by [Up to Date](#).

We suggest pairing these behavioral modifications with [cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia \(CBT-I\)](#) for optimal results.

To learn more about treating insomnia, review the [slides](#) and [recording](#) from our August 2022 Mind Matters ECHO meeting, Difficulty Sleeping and Depression.

Recommendation	Details
Regular bedtime and rise time	Having a consistent bedtime and rise time leads to more regular sleep schedules and avoids periods of sleep deprivation or periods of extended wakefulness during the night
Avoid napping	Avoid napping, especially naps lasting longer than 1 hour and naps late in the day
Limit caffeine	Avoid caffeine after lunch. The time between lunch and bedtime represents approximately 2 half-lives for caffeine, and this time window allows for most caffeine to be metabolized before bedtime.
Limit alcohol	Recommendations are typically focused on avoiding alcohol near bedtime. Alcohol is initially sedating, but activating as it is metabolized. Alcohol also negatively impacts sleep architecture.
Avoid nicotine	Nicotine is a stimulant and should be avoided near bedtime and at night.
Exercise	Daytime physical activity is encouraged, in particular 4 to 6 hours before bedtime, as this may facilitate sleep onset. Rigorous exercise within 2 hours of bedtime is discouraged.

Keep the sleep environment quiet and dark	<p>Noise and light exposure during the night can disrupt sleep. White noise or ear plugs are often recommended to reduce noise. Using blackout shades or an eye mask is commonly recommended to reduce light.</p> <p>This may also include avoiding exposure to television or technology near bedtime, as this can have an impact on circadian rhythms by shifting sleep timing later.</p>
Bedroom clock	<p>Avoid checking the time at night. This includes alarm clocks and other time pieces (e.g., watches and smart phones). Checking the time increases cognitive arousal and prolongs wakefulness.</p>
Evening eating	<p>Avoid a large meal near bedtime, but don't go to bed hungry. Eat a healthy and filling meal in the evening and avoid late-night snacks.</p>