

A photograph of a Black woman with curly hair and a Black man smiling and embracing each other. The woman is wearing a pink sweater and has her arms around the man's shoulders. The man is wearing a dark shirt. The background is a bright, out-of-focus indoor setting.

10 Effective Sleep Habits for Adults

**ARMY
FAMILY**
IS AN UNSTOPPABLE FORCE



Sleep Tips for Army Family Members

Sleep is vital for health, performance, and wellbeing. That is why healthy sleep habits, that promote optimal sleep duration and quality, are important for everyone.

- **1. Create a quiet, dark, comfortable sleeping environment.** Cover windows with darkening drapes or shades or wear a sleep mask to block light. If you can, adjust the room temperature to suit you. Use the room fan to muffle noise AND keep you cool.
- **2. Remove distractions from the bedroom.** Make sure your bed is comfortable and use it only for sleeping. Don't read, watch TV, or listen to music in bed. Remove all TVs, computers, and other "gadgets" from the bedroom. Don't dwell on, or bring your problems or emotionally upsetting arguments to bed.
- **3. Stop caffeine at least 6 hours before bedtime.** Caffeine promotes wakefulness and disrupts sleep.
- **4. Don't drink alcohol before bed.** Alcohol reduces the recuperative value of sleep. If you need help to stop drinking see your healthcare provider for options.
- **5. Get your exercise in by early evening.** If you experience difficulty initiating or maintaining sleep after nighttime exercise, try exercising at least 3 hours before bedtime.
- **6. Do not go to bed hungry.** A light bedtime snack (for example, milk and crackers) can be helpful, but do not eat a large meal close to bedtime. Also, empty your bladder before you go to bed, so that the urge to urinate does not disrupt your sleep.

The following sleep hygiene tips are especially critical for those experiencing sleep problems:

- **7. Maintain a consistent, regular routine that starts with a fixed wake-up time.** Start by setting a fixed time to wake up, get out of bed, and get exposure to light each day. Pick a time that you can maintain during the week AND on weekends. Adjust your bedtime so that you target 7–8 hours of sleep.
- **8. Get out of bed if you can't sleep.** Do not try to force yourself to fall asleep – it will tend to make you more awake. If you wake up in the middle of the night, give yourself about 20 minutes to return to sleep. Do not return to bed until you feel sleepy.
- **9. Nap wisely.** Naps longer than 1 hour and/or if they are taken late in the day (after 3 PM), can cause problems falling asleep or staying asleep at night. If you need to nap for safety reasons (e.g., driving), try to take a 30-60 minute nap in the late morning or early afternoon, just enough to take the edge off your sleepiness.
- **10. Move the bedroom clock to where you cannot see it.** If you tend to check the clock two or more times during the night, cover the clock face or turn it around so that you can't see it.



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That's
the
number
of
blinking
lights that
you
should
have in
your
bedroom

0

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