

Further Sleep Hygiene - A Natural Remedy For Insomnia

Sleep hygiene is simply that routine which you follow before bedtime and which is designed to ensure that you fall asleep quickly and remain asleep throughout the night. In a previous article we looked at the importance of setting yourself a time for going to bed and for getting up in the morning and also at taking positive steps to relax both your body and mind in the hour or so before retiring. Here we're going to look at some other important aspects of your sleep hygiene routine.

Taking a bath Although many people today tend to shower rather than take a bath and see taking a bath as something of a special luxury, taking a bath is in fact an excellent way to help your body unwind and relax at the end of a busy day. Perhaps more importantly, a good hot bath raises your body temperature but, once you get out of the bath, your body temperature starts to fall and it is this gradual drop in temperature that makes you feel sleepy. So, taking a bath about an hour to an hour and a half before you go to bed, and then taking time after your bath to relax, is an excellent sleep aid.

Eating before retiring Eating a heavy meal shortly before bed can lead to a number of problems once you climb into bed including heartburn and general discomfort, both of which are quite likely to give you problems in getting to sleep and lead to you waking during the night. At the opposite end of the scale if you go to bed without having eaten enough during the evening you're also likely to wake feeling hungry during the night. The answer here is to find a comfortable middle position if you want to eat before retiring and simply have a light snack composed of something healthy. Some foods such as turkey, peanuts and milk help to trigger the release of serotonin, a chemical produced naturally within the body to help you to relax. While on the subject of eating, the same principle applies to drinking. Too much liquid before going to bed will also have you waking during the night to visit the bathroom, so limit your drinking before going to bed.

Keep a diary by your bed Even if your body is relaxed and ready for sleep, you're not going to get to sleep if your brain remains active and is busy focusing on all the things you need to do tomorrow. One good way to clear your mind is to keep a diary and to write it up each day just before you go to sleep. The simple act of writing down the day's events and your plans for tomorrow has the effect of clearing them out of your mind, as if they have now been dealt with, and lets your mind relax.

Don't struggle to sleep if you aren't sleepy If you aren't sleepy there's no point in simply lying in bed tossing and turning. Get up and do something which you find relaxing and which will help to induce sleep, such as reading a book or doing some relaxation exercises such as yoga, perhaps accompanied by your favorite quiet and relaxing music. Once you begin to feel sleepy you can climb back into bed again and will be fast asleep in no time at all.

About the Author

Directory of links to natural resource and environmental management degree programs, jobs, agencies and short courses in Australian.

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