



Sleep hygiene

Our body has an internal clock, which used to go by the sunlight before electricity existed. Therefore, many simple things can be done nowadays to reestablish a better sleep.

Did you know that there is no good medication for primary insomnia? The most studied and effective way to cure insomnia is developing a good sleep hygiene. However, you might need medication to sleep or to help with other conditions such as anxiety, depression, or even psychosis, as they also can impair sleep. Often, when a loved one or oneself suffers from a psychiatric disorder, a change in sleep pattern is both a sign of something not going well, and will also increase the risk of relapsing.

- Try to avoid screen (TV, phone) 2 hours prior to going to sleep. Indeed, back in the days, a light would mean sun! Since our brain is trained to see bright light to start the day, avoiding screens (or at least decreasing the luminosity intensity) will help greatly to unwind and fall asleep.
- Make a relaxing routine before going to bed.
- The bedroom is best reserved for the two S: sex and sleep. If you do many other activities, your brain will associate your bedroom with being awake and active.
- As our body has an inner clock inside, it is easier for us to wake up at the same hour every day, even on weekends.
- If you toss and turn in your bed, you might get frustrated or worry about the consequences of insomnia. Those emotions are arousing your body and brain, therefore making it harder to fall asleep. Therefore, leave the bedroom, go listen to some quiet music or read a very boring book, and go back when you are tired only.
- Avoid drinking coffee or alcohol before going to bed. Coffee is a stimulant, and alcohol, even if you might feel that it helps you fall asleep, will impair the quality of your sleep. Also, it will worsened any other condition such as anxiety or depression that also might contribute to insomnia.
- If you are hungry, chose a light snack over a big meal prior to sleeping.
- Make sure the room is not too cold, nor too warm.
- Ideally, a bedroom temperature should be around 65 degrees or 18 C