

# 10 tips for a better sleep

## Have a regular sleep pattern.

Aim to go to bed and wake up at approximately the same time every day, even on weekends or days off. Establishing a consistent sleep-wake routine requires time and dedication, but it will promote better sleep.

## Dedicate the right duration to sleep.

Adults typically need between 7 and 9 hours of sleep each night. However, some may need slightly more or less sleep.

A common error made by those with sleep difficulties is spending too much time in bed, leading to fragmented and poor-quality sleep.

Aim to limit your time in bed to a maximum of 8.5 hours. If you struggle to fall asleep and take hours to fall asleep, consider going to bed later. It is ideal to only go to bed when you are feeling sleepy.

## Make the bed a space for sleep, not for entertainment.

Electronic devices like smartphones and tablets can disrupt your sleep. If you must use them at night, ensure a blue light filter is activated to reduce blue light exposure, which can make falling asleep more challenging.

## Take it easy and wind down before sleep.

Create a calming pre-sleep routine to help you unwind. This might include turning off electronic devices and taking a warm shower. Engage in relaxing activities rather than mentally or physically demanding ones before bed. Find and regularly practice a relaxation technique that works for you.

## Keep your bedroom dark, quiet, and cozy.

Your sleep environment should be as comfortable as possible. Most people sleep better in a cool room rather than a warm one, so ensure your bedroom temperature is not too high and you are not feeling too warm in bed.

**Dr Edward Lee**

Sleep Disorders and Respiratory Physician



[www.edwardlee.com.au](http://www.edwardlee.com.au)



East Doncaster



Box Hill

# 10 tips for a better sleep

## Steer clear of alcohol, caffeine, and cigarettes in the evening.

While alcohol might initially help you fall asleep, it often leads to disturbed and fragmented sleep. Caffeine and nicotine are stimulants that can cause insomnia and restless sleep. It's best to avoid these substances in the evening.

## Resist the urge to nap during the day if possible.

Daytime napping can make it harder to sleep at night. If you must nap, keep it brief — between 10 and 20 minutes — and avoid napping in the late afternoon or evening, as it can interfere with getting to sleep that night when you do go to bed.

## Avoid sleeping pills except in exceptional circumstances.

Sleeping pills may be helpful in certain situations but are generally a short-term solution. Over time, they often become less effective. For chronic insomnia, cognitive behavioural therapy for insomnia (CBT-i), usually provided by Sleep Specialists or Sleep Psychologists, can be very effective. You might consider a free evidence based Australian online CBTi course, such as the one offered by This Way Up (<https://thiswayup.org.au/>).

## Don't let the clock distract you if you're unable to sleep.

Watching the clock can increase anxiety, worsening insomnia. Try to sleep without a visible clock or turn it away from you. If you wake up during the night, focus on how comfortable and relaxed you feel in bed, instead of checking the time.

## You may need professional help.

Some sleep problems are persistent, and don't go away quickly with simple measures. It may take a little more time to work out the entire range of sleep problems in you. If you are concerned about your sleep or are experiencing unusual sleep-related symptoms, consult your General Practitioner to see if a referral to a sleep specialist might benefit you.

**Dr Edward Lee**

Sleep Disorders and Respiratory Physician



[www.edwardlee.com.au](http://www.edwardlee.com.au)



East Doncaster



Box Hill