



CONTRA COSTA HEALTH SERVICES WELLNESS TIPS WE ARE ALL IN THIS TOGETHER!



Vol. 1, Issue 126

<https://cchealth.org/wellness/>

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GOOD SLEEP by Onagh Mackenzie, M.D.

Good sleep helps us learn efficiently, consolidate memories, improve mood, and reduce inflammation. Focusing on our lifestyle practices before and during sleep, often called ‘**sleep hygiene**,’ can help us prioritize and optimize our slumbering hours.



Tips to Improve Sleep:

1. **Wake up at the same time** each day. Try to do this even on weekends!
2. **Limit your caffeine** intake. Stick with 1-2 cups of coffee or try decaf. Morning coffee can linger into bedtime.
3. **Get moving!** [Physical activity](#), especially in the morning sunlight, helps us sleep well later.
4. **Get support** for medical problems that can interfere with sleep – including chronic pain, anxiety, depression, tobacco, or alcohol use.
5. **Eat a light dinner**, not too close to your bedtime. Avoid coffee, caffeinated tea, soda, alcohol, and chocolate in the evenings.
6. **Turn off** your TV, put away your computer, and [turn your phone to ‘Do Not Disturb’](#) at least 30 minutes before bed. Try to quiet your mind without screens to remind your body that bedtime is coming. Warm baths, [gentle stretching](#), calm music, or a good book can be helpful.
7. **Create** a [comfortable sleep environment](#) that is dark, cool, and quiet. Dim the lights and draw the shades, ensure a cool but comfortable temperature, quiet outside noises or try a white noise machine. Keep the bedroom free from technology as much as possible.
8. **Close your eyes at the same time** each night. If 15 minutes pass and you cannot fall asleep, leave the bedroom. Find a quiet space in your house to sit or read until you get sleepy. Then try again. Keep repeating if needed!

Night Shift Tricks:

1. Try to **shift your sleep** so you wake up close to the start of your night shift. Sometimes this means staying awake when you get home and going to bed a bit later. **Sleep splitting** is another strategy -- sleep for a few hours when you get home and then take an extended nap closer to the start of your shift.
2. **Avoid caffeine** 3-4 hours before your shift ends.
3. Don't forget the basic sleep hygiene tips from above!

More info & sources:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/staying-healthy/better-sleep-naturally>;

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7189699/>;

<https://healthysleep.med.harvard.edu/healthy/matters/benefits-of-sleep/learning-memory>



About Onagh Mackenzie, M.D.

“Growing up on my family’s farm in Western New York, I became interested in the connections between community, place, and health. Prior to medical school, I completed my MPH and worked with community health and food justice non-profits in Alaska and Navajo Nation. My interests within family medicine span a broad range – from addiction and street medicine to reproductive and rural health – and I was drawn to CCFMR for its exceptional training in these areas and its commitment to health equity.”

We Care About You. Wellness Core Team Members: Priscilla Aguirre, Amanda Dold, Will Harper, Patricia Hennigan, Helena Martey, Brian M. Johnson, Kristin Moeller, Samir Shah, Alvin Silva, Sonia Sutherland, Arlene Trimble, Emily Warming