

Healthy Sleep Habits for Older Adults

A good night's sleep can do wonders for your mood, mind, and physical health. However, feeling rested can seem more and more elusive as you get older even though sleep is a major part of healthy aging in the senior years. Without proper sleep, seniors can demonstrate impaired judgment, forgetfulness, and can become physically ill more easily. If you or your loved one seems to be struggling with getting restful sleep at night, you might find some relief by making conscious decisions to implement healthy sleep habits. Here are a few ways you can make a move in the direction of sound sleep.



Resist napping

If you aren't sleeping well at night, an afternoon nap can feel like a welcome event. However, napping daily can confuse your body and make it harder to sleep fitfully at night. Napping quickly becomes a habit, and sometimes seniors find themselves napping not out of necessity, but out of boredom. If you are snoozing because you are bored, a social visit with a friend or a [Visiting Angels caregiver](#) is more cognitively stimulating

and a healthier way to pass the time.

If you must have a nap, do so occasionally and resist making it a daily occurrence. Further, keep your naps to less than 60 minutes; these "power naps" recharge your body without doing damage to your nighttime routine.

Move your body daily

An active body during the day makes for a tired body at night. For those seniors with insomnia or difficulty falling asleep, staying active during the day can be especially helpful for catching some much needed sleep. Your daily activity doesn't have to be strenuous to be effective; try taking a daily walk around your neighborhood or taking a daily exercise class at your local senior center.

Keep a consistent bedtime and routine

Research has been showing the importance of consistent nighttime routines for people of all ages. If you don't have an evening routine that you stick to before bed, start one! Your body and brain will begin to unwind and relax easier with cues in your routine showing that it is time for bed. Try

something simple like changing into comfortable pajamas before reading in bed, or having a cup of calming tea in the kitchen before bed.

Part of a successful bedtime routine is performing physical tasks like changing into pajamas, bathing, or going to the restroom. If you find yourself neglecting these tasks more often than not because it is just too difficult and you are too tired, one of our [Visiting Angels](#) can provide the support you need to develop a safe and healthy bedtime routine.

Talk to your doctor

Finally, if you are having problems getting to sleep or staying asleep, talk to your doctor about it. Sleep disruptions can often be a sign of other health problems, and your doctor can give you advice and follow up care to get your body the rest it needs.

Ready to read more about senior issues that pertain to you or your loved one? Curious about other senior topics and challenges? [Check out our Family Resource Center](#) for insightful articles, caregiver tips and other important resources.

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