



## Pillars Community Health

Healing. Caring. Educating.

# 5 Sleep Hygiene Tips

It is important to practice good sleep hygiene (have good sleeping habits), as sleeping poorly increases the risk of having poor mental health. Effects of poor sleep hygiene could be emotional impacts, difficulty relaxing, behavioral challenges, increased tension, and cognitive distortions. Obtaining adequate sleep can increase thought processing for decision-making, increase motivation, and reduce behaviors that would move you away from your health goals. Here are some ways to improve your sleeping habits and better your mental health:

1. **Bedroom Routine:** You can develop your own rituals of activities to remind your body that it is time to sleep. This might include light stretches, a warm bath, and deep breathing.
2. **Maintain a Regular Sleeping Schedule:** Train your body by going to bed and getting up at about the same time every day. Avoid naps. If you cannot make it through the day without a nap, make sure it is for less than an hour.
3. **Avoid Overstimulating Mind Activities:** Frequently checking the clock, playing games, or phone screen time during the night can wake you up. If you have not been able to get to sleep after about 20 minutes or more, get up and do something calming or “boring” until you feel sleepy, then return to bed and try again.
4. **Eat Right:** Some people find that a very empty stomach at bedtime is distracting, so it can be useful to have a light snack—but also, a heavy meal soon before bed can also interrupt sleep. Avoid caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol 4-6 hours before bed.
5. **Examine Your Space:** It is important that your sleeping space is quiet and comfortable. Adjust the lighting with curtains or wearing an eye mask. Earplugs are resourceful if there is noise near your space.

Pillars Community Health provides health, social and educational services including Medical, Dental, Mental Health and Addictions, Domestic and Sexual Violence, Benefits Assistance, Prevention/Health Education and Outreach, and more. We envision communities where all people have equal access to the care they need, when they need it. Learn more at [www.PillarsCommunityHealth.org](http://www.PillarsCommunityHealth.org), or call 708-745-5277.