

Get a better night's rest with proper sleep techniques

Did you ever have one of those nights when you toss and turn all night long? How did you feel the next day? You probably felt fuzzy and out of it, and you may have even had trouble keeping your eyes open. You surely didn't do your best work.

When we don't sleep well at night, it can drastically affect our energy level the next day. It can lead to weight gain and a decreased ability to manage stress, concentrate and make decisions. A full night's rest helps to rejuvenate our bodies and plays a vital part in our overall health. According to the National Sleep Foundation, sleep is how we repair muscle tissue, consolidate memory, improve our immune system and release hormones that regulate our appetite. The Sleep Foundation recommends that adults get 7-9 hours of sleep a night.

If you struggle with getting a good night's rest, here are some tips to help:

Make sure you have a good sleeping area

- Use your bedroom only for sleeping.
- Keep your bedroom quiet, dark, and cool. Use curtains or blinds to block out light.
- Consider using soothing music or a "white noise" machine to block out noise.

Keep a consistent evening and bedtime routine

- Get regular exercise but not within three or four hours before your bedtime.
- Create a relaxing bedtime routine. You might want to take a warm shower or bath, listen to soothing music, or drink a cup of decaffeinated tea.
- Use a sleep mask and earplugs, if light and noise bother you.

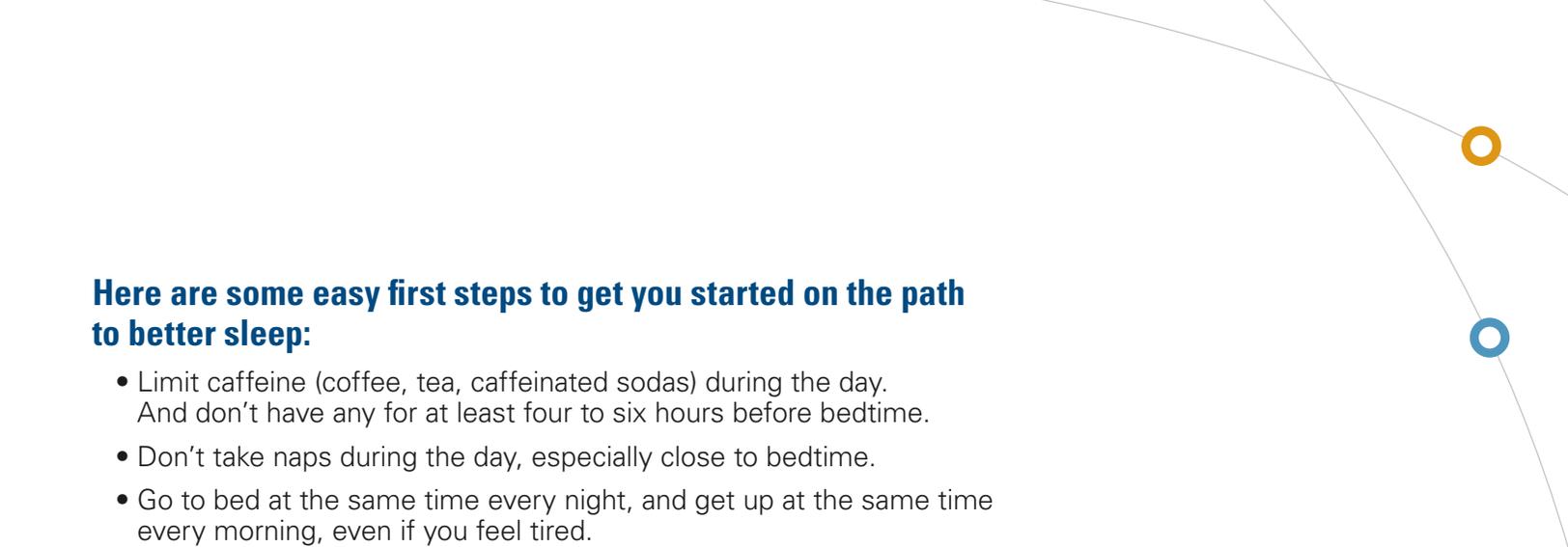
Manage your daytime activities

- Get outside during daylight hours. Sunlight helps to reset your body's sleep and wake cycles.
- Don't drink alcohol before bedtime. Alcohol can cause you to wake up more often during the night.
- Don't smoke or use tobacco, especially in the evening. Nicotine can keep you awake.
- Don't take medicine that may keep you awake, or make you feel hyper or energized, right before bed. Your doctor can tell you if your medicine may do this and if you can take it earlier in the day.

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Call your health coach if you have questions.

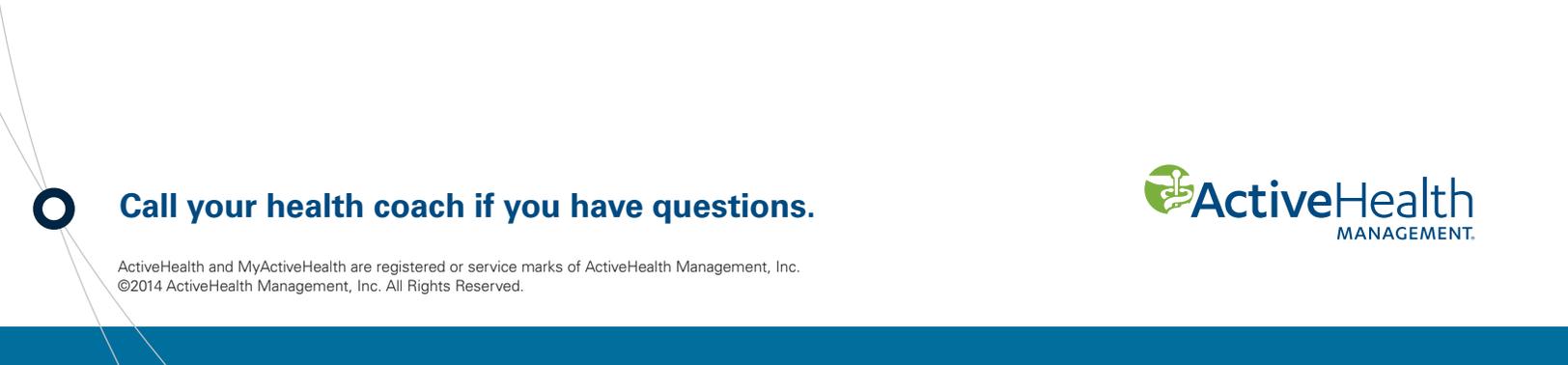


Here are some easy first steps to get you started on the path to better sleep:

- Limit caffeine (coffee, tea, caffeinated sodas) during the day. And don't have any for at least four to six hours before bedtime.
- Don't take naps during the day, especially close to bedtime.
- Go to bed at the same time every night, and get up at the same time every morning, even if you feel tired.

If you can't sleep because you are in great pain or have an injury, or you often feel anxious at night, or you often have bad dreams or nightmares, talk with your doctor.

Resources: Healthwise, National Sleep Foundation



Call your health coach if you have questions.

