

# Week 4: Creating a Sleep Friendly Lifestyle

Manageable changes to your daily routine can improve your sleep!

## Daily Habits that Impact Sleep

The Habit	The Impact	The Simple Change
Electronics before bed	The blue light coming from electronics has been shown to suppress melatonin production for about twice as long as green light, making it hard to fall asleep.	Eliminate electronics and other sources of blue light <b>30 minutes</b> before you want to fall asleep.
Caffeine/ Nicotine	These substances are all stimulants that keep you alert and focused. Very counterproductive when trying to sleep!	Don't consume caffeine <b>within 5 hours</b> of going to sleep or nicotine <b>within 2 hours</b> .
Exercise	Regular exercise can actually improve sleep, but exercise before bed can make it difficult to fall asleep because your body temp and heart rate are elevated.	Finish your workout at least <b>3 hours</b> before bed to ensure you're getting all the benefits and none of the sleep interference.
Food Choices	Overeating right before bed can cause your body to bloat and leave you feeling uncomfortable, making it harder to fall asleep at night.	Try not to eat within <b>2 hours</b> of falling asleep. If you do eat, avoid spicy foods or go for a snack that won't impact your sleep, like a carbohydrate.
Alcohol	Some people use alcohol to help them fall asleep but it actually decreases sleep quality by making you more restless later on in the evening, leading to a lighter night's sleep.	Try to avoid consuming alcohol right before going to sleep.

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## Only Sleep when Sleepy

- If you try to go to bed when you're not sleepy, you may associate your bed with **feeling frustrated** or with things that are not related to sleep, like homework.
- When you can't fall asleep after about 15 minutes, **get up and go into another room**. If you are in a residence hall, get out of bed and do something non-sleep related, but that is relaxing. Return to bed only when you feel sleepy.

**Try doing some stretches, meditation, listening to calming music or reading a book at your desk.**

## Remember...

Your bed is not for eating, doing homework, being on your phone or studying! You want your mind to associate your bed with as few things outside sleep as possible. That way when you get into bed, your body knows it's a place to fall asleep.

## Managing Stress for Better Sleep

If you start to notice your stress is causing you to lose sleep here are some simple ways to manage those feelings.

### 1. **Assess what's stressful**

- If you don't know the cause of the stress, you'll never be able to get to the solution.

### 2. **Write about it**

- Keep up with your sleep journals and make note of any patterns in sleep.

### 3. **Practice keeping positive thoughts**

- Go to bed thinking that tomorrow is a new day and you will have a fresh start to get things done!
- Don't go to bed thinking about everything you have to do the next day. Allow yourself the rest you need!

### 4. **Limit social media before bed**

- This can be a source of negative thoughts, feelings, stress and anxiety, all emotions we want to eliminate before trying to relax and sleep.

## Goals to work on:

- Make one lifestyle change this week to improve your sleep.
  - Eventually, add another, then another!
- Continue tracking and monitoring your sleep patterns even after the study is over.
- If you do struggle with sleep, reflect on your day and try to figure out what may be the root cause of your sleep difficulties.