



Tips for Better Sleep and Recovery

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If you want to improve your athletic performance, proper rest and recovery are critical. In some ways, they are even more important than your training. Getting better sleep is an important component of rest and recovery. Entire books have been written on sleep and how to improve your sleep. There are some easy steps you can take to improve sleep without buying a new mattress or sleeping until noon. Many of these steps will just make the time you are actually trying to sleep more productive.

Stop using your phone and other screen devices within 90 minutes of going to bed

Phones, tablets, computers and televisions emit a blue light that negatively affects your brain. That blue light might not be a problem during the day. At night, though, it can make it hard to fall asleep. Turn off all technology at least an hour, or better yet, 90 minutes, before you go to bed. Read a book. Spend time with your kids. Write in your journal. Just don't stare at an electronic device.

Remove electronics from your bedroom

For some of the same reasons as mentioned in the previous step, technology is not your friend when it comes to sleep. Don't put a TV on the wall of your bedroom and watch TV as you get in bed. Don't read eBooks on your tablet, and don't check emails or texts on your phone. Plus, find anything that has an indicator light and either remove that object or cover the light with tape. Make your room as dark as possible.

Don't exercise within 3 hours of going to sleep

Lots of people like to exercise in the early evening, so this may be hard. Sleep experts think that heavy exercise can raise your body temperature and get your hormone levels going in a way that could

make it hard to fall asleep. Try to exercise in the morning or afternoon or give yourself about three hours after your workout before you lay down to sleep.

Don't eat a heavy meal within 3 hours of going to sleep

In much the same way as exercise at night, eating a very heavy meal could disrupt your sleep. A small snack might be ok, but don't eat a big meal right before you go to bed.

Have a constant wake time every morning, even on weekends

Pick the time that's best for you to wake up and not feel rushed each morning. Wake up at that time every day. This rule does include weekends. Your body will get used to that time, and you will wake more rested. If you set it for one time during the week but then sleep several hours later on the weekends, you destroy that natural wake pattern.