12 Steps to a good sleep environment

1. Make sure that the bedroom is quiet and dark. Keep the room a restful and peaceful haven. Black out blinds will make the room darker if necessary.

2. Is your bed comfortable? When did you last change your mattress and pillows? Is your bed too big or too small?

3. No TVs or iPads or phones to be used ideally in the hour before bed, especially in the bedroom. The blue light emitted from electronics suppresses the production of melatonin, our hormone that helps us sleep.

4. If possible keep regular bedtimes. Check your average sleep needs. It's between seven and nine hours for adults, ten hours for teens.

5. Keep room temperature between 16-18 deg C. High temperatures disturb sleep.

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7 Environmental noise within the home should be kept to a minimum.

8 Make sure that you do not go to bed hungry.

9 Avoid stimulating activity in the hour before bedtime. Try not to check social media last thing at night, your brain will keep working at too fast a pace to help you sleep.

10 Include low sugar and low energy release foods in the last meal before bedtime. Avoid drinks such as cola, chocolate, tea and coffee. Have water beside the bed if you're thirsty in the night.

11 Wake at a regular hour each morning so that the circadian (daily) cycle is strengthened. Try not to catch up on sleep at weekends.

12 Make sure you get a good dose of daylight first thing to help you wake. In the winter months you could use a Lumie clock (or similar).

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