

# Tips for Avoiding Insomnia and Getting a Good Night's Sleep

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DENVER, CO — Sleep is important for overall health, but for many people a restful night's sleep can prove elusive. [Insomnia](#), the most common sleep disorder, includes having difficulty falling asleep, waking often during the night, or waking up too early along with some associated daytime impairment. Forty-eight percent of Americans report occasional bouts with insomnia. For 10 to 22 percent of the population, however, insomnia is a chronic condition.

Chronic insomnia is defined as suffering from insomnia at least three times a week for a period of at least three months. People suffering from chronic insomnia are encouraged to see a sleep specialist. There are a variety of therapies available for those who suffer from insomnia ranging from [cognitive behavioral therapy](#) to prescription [sleeping pills](#).

For those who battle occasional insomnia, [Jack Edinger, PhD](#), professor in the [Department of Medicine](#) at National Jewish Health recommends the following tips to get your sleep back on track:

## Maintain a Consistent Wake Time

An established wake time will help your biological clock develop a routine. It's more important to wake up at the same time every morning, weekends included, than going to bed at the same time each night. Going to bed at the same time each night is not much help if you're just laying there wishing you could fall asleep.

## Set Aside Time to Relax Before Bed

It's important to unwind. If your mind is still racing right before you jump into bed, you'll likely not be able to shut it off immediately to fall asleep. Give yourself some downtime before bed. Take a bath, read a book or watch some television. Anything thing that is mentally taxing should be stopped at least 30 minutes before you plan to go to bed.

## Know When to Get Out of Bed

Don't toss and turn endlessly. Most of us have found ourselves in bed, staring at the clock, wishing we could fall asleep. We worry about not getting enough sleep and how tired we'll be in the morning. When it becomes clear that you are wide awake and unlikely to fall asleep any time soon, get out of bed. Find something relaxing to do, from reading to TV or a bath. Then return to bed when you begin to feel tired.

## Watch What You're Drinking

Keep an eye on your caffeine and alcohol intake. Limit caffeine in the afternoon and evening. Excessive alcohol can alter sleep patterns and lead to a lack of sound sleep.

## Good Sleep Hygiene Is Important

Make your bedroom a good sleep environment by keeping it dark and cool. Don't use your bedroom to watch television, read or listen to the radio. Exercise during the day can be a great way to get a good night's sleep. Stay away from large meals close to bedtime.

## Research Opportunities

To learn more about Dr. Edinger's research or other research projects at the [Center for Health Promotion](#), contact the Center for Health Promotion at [CHP@NJHealth.org](mailto:CHP@NJHealth.org) or 303.398.1938.

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## Media Contacts

Our team is available to arrange interviews, discuss events and story ideas.

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