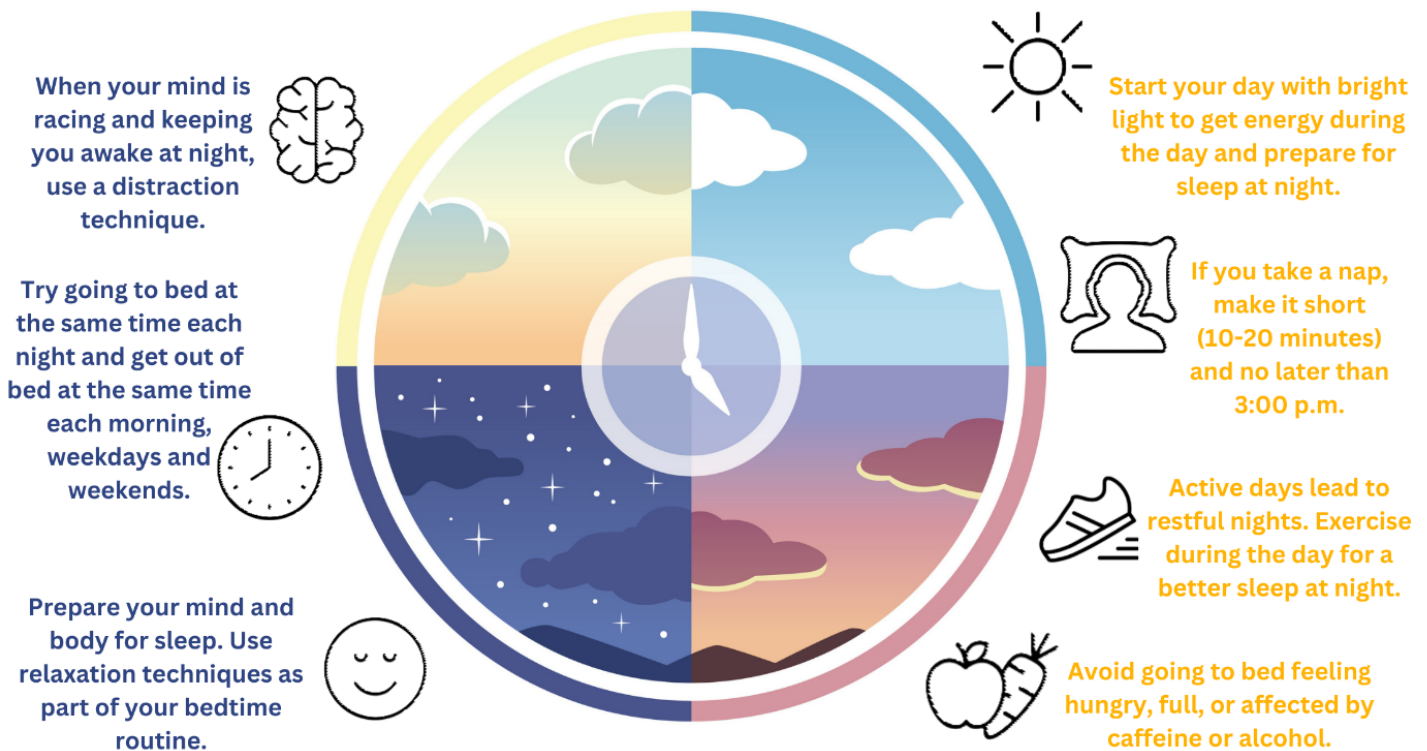


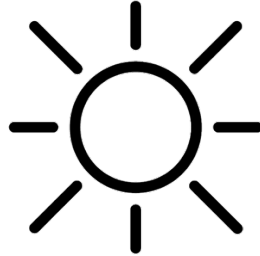
WEEK FOR BETTER SLEEP SEMAINE POUR MIEUX DORMIR

Tips Summary for people 65+



Your whole day matters

Day 1 Sleep Tip: Let in the light



Start your day with bright light to get energy during the day and prepare for sleep at night.

When you wake up, bright light helps activate your brain and set your body's schedule. Seeing morning light signals to your body's internal clock that it's time to be awake, alert, and active.

First thing in the morning, open your curtains to let in the light. If you wake before the sun rises, spend time in a brightly lit room to help you wake up. If you are able, going outside early in the day is one of the best things you can do to set your body clock. The morning is a great time for an outdoor walk, some gardening, or enjoying your morning coffee in the sunlight.

Bright light in the evening lowers your sleep hormones and makes your brain more awake. Since TVs, computers, phones, and tablets all have screens that are like mini-lamps, using them in the two hours before bedtime can make it harder for you to fall asleep. If you really need to use them, use an orange filter to lower the impact on your body clock (there are several apps you can download on your phone, tablet, or computer for that purpose).

Day 2 Sleep Tip:

Active days lead to restful nights



Exercise during the day for a better sleep at night.

Make time for exercise most days. You will meet [Canada's movement guidelines](#) for people 65 years and older by doing 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise five times per week (making your heart pump a little). Add muscle strengthening exercises at least twice per week, as well as activities to improve your balance. Daytime exercises will help maintain your health and set you up for a good night's sleep.

There are many ways to get exercise. It's important to find what works for you.

You could go for a brisk walk, jog, swim, or bike ride. You could try yoga or group exercise classes tailored to your age. You can also include exercise in your daily activities, such as walking the dog, taking stairs instead of the elevator, or parking farther from your destination to fit in some extra steps. Find ways to get your heart rate up and add a bit of sweat to your day.

Exercising during the day will help you sleep at night. However, avoid vigorous exercise in the hour before your bedtime, as it can interfere with a good night's sleep.

Note: If you have not been exercising, start with gentle exercise, such as walking and increase the pace. If you are unsure of what type and intensity of exercise is appropriate for you, speak to a healthcare professional.

Day 3 Sleep Tip: **Eat, drink and sleep**



**Avoid going to bed feeling hungry, full,
or affected by caffeine or alcohol.**

We all need to eat, drink, and sleep to live. But sometimes those needs can compete at bedtime. When you go to bed, it's important to feel comfortable — not hungry, overly full, or thirsty — and to avoid the effects of caffeine and alcohol on sleep.

Ensure you're adequately fueled and hydrated during the day. Avoid foods that you know cause you to feel uncomfortable around bedtime.

Caffeine is found in many beverages and foods. Did you know that caffeine can stay in your system for over 10 hours? An after-dinner coffee, tea, or chocolate dessert could make getting to sleep much harder. From mid-afternoon, avoid caffeinated food and drinks and try switching to non-caffeinated beverages such as herbal tea.

Alcohol can make people feel sleepy but is actually a sleep disruptor that causes people to wake through the night.

Day 4 Sleep Tip: **Nap wisely**



**If you take a nap, make it short (10-20 minutes)
and no later than 3:00 p.m.**

As we get older, napping during the day can become more common. It can be a normal and healthy part of our daily sleep-wake cycle. It can also be a source of sleep problems. One of our natural body rhythms is called the "sleep drive". It is low in the morning when you start your day, and it increases over the day and evening until you fall asleep.

Longer naps and naps late in the day reduce your sleep drive. This can make you less sleepy at bedtime, resulting in difficulty falling or staying asleep. To keep naps from interfering with your sleep, do them earlier in the day and keep them short by setting an alarm (make it no longer than 20 minutes). A short nap allows more time to build your sleep drive as bedtime approaches.

If you are feeling tired after lunch or as dinner approaches, get physically active to help increase your energy. This will also help you be ready for sleep at night (exercise no later than one hour before bedtime).

Day 5 Sleep Tip: Prepare your mind and body for sleep



Use relaxation techniques as part of your bedtime routine.

As bedtime approaches each night, there is a gradual chemical shift in your brain that helps your mind and body prepare for sleep. Adding relaxation techniques to your bedtime routine or spending some time enjoying a calm and relaxing activity can support these chemical shifts. This will make it easier to fall asleep.

Having the right conditions as you prepare for sleep includes having a quiet, low-lit area that is neither too cold nor too warm. It can also be helpful to spend a few minutes each night relaxing your mind and body using one of many different relaxation techniques, such as progressive muscle relaxation, breathing exercises, and meditation.

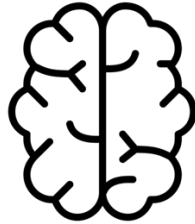
We invite you to try a breathing exercise now that you can practice during the day before putting it into practice in the evening:

Click on this box to hear the breathing exercise:



To learn about other relaxation techniques and find one that works for you: [Click HERE](#).

Day 6 Sleep Tip: Distract your mind

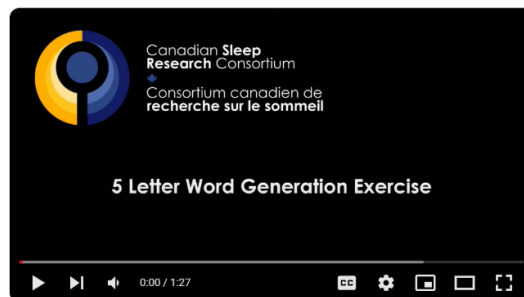


When your mind is racing and keeping you awake at night, use a distraction technique.

Thoughts can keep your mind alert and active late into the night, and this can feel hard to control. Most of us have experienced it — you climb into bed, and suddenly you're making mental plans and to-do lists; or worrying about your work, loved ones, or finances.

You can use distraction techniques to replace whatever thoughts keep you up at night. A good distraction technique is one that occupies your thoughts while allowing your brain's activity to slow down and sleep to take over. There are many ways you can distract your mind from thoughts that make it hard to sleep. It will take a bit of practice at first, but you will get better at it over time.

Common distraction techniques include background noise (such as a white noise machine or fan), 20-minute stories, and the five-letter word generation exercise (please click on the video below to learn more).



To discover other distraction techniques to quiet your mind: [Click here.](#)

Day 7 Sleep Tip:

Steady bedtime and steady rise time



Try going to bed at the same time each night and get out of bed at the same time each morning.

If you have difficulty sleeping, an important step to getting your sleep on track is to set a regular bedtime and rise time. Choose a morning rise time and a bedtime that works for you and that you can follow each day. This can be hard to follow, but it can be a very quick way to improve your sleep.

Rise at the same time each day: Don't let yourself stay in bed past your rise time. If waking up is hard to do, plan in advance a morning activity that will motivate you to get out of bed - a short walk, play a fun and easy game, or a call with a friend or family member in the morning. If you wake a little earlier than your rise time, you can leave the bed.

Don't let yourself fall asleep before your bedtime: If you are struggling to stay awake in the evening, plan ahead. Have ready a simple, quiet activity to pass the time even if you feel sleepy. You could do a puzzle, listen to music, or read a magazine or book next to a low-intensity lamp. It is best to avoid TV or other screens at least 60 minutes before bedtime.

If you wake up at night and can't fall back to sleep: After 20 minutes lying awake, leave your bed and only return when feeling sleepy. Watching TV or using your phone or tablet can keep you awake. Instead, engage in a quiet non-stimulating activity, like reading a book, doing a puzzle, or listening to soft music. Go back to bed when you feel ready to sleep. Repeat as needed. Create a comfortable space in the home where you can go when this happens (with a light blanket next to a low-intensity lamp in a comfy chair).

Thank you for joining *Week for Better Sleep!*

For additional resources, visit our website at
researchsleep.ca

Do you think you may have insomnia?

[Click here](#) to learn more about treatments for insomnia (not involving any medication) and how to access them.

