

Six tips to fall asleep faster and easier

For the average adult, a good night's sleep means getting seven to eight hours*. It's not just the amount of time you sleep, it's the quality.

And not just any old sleep will do; in order for it to truly benefit us, it has to be good quality sleep that lets us wake up feeling rested and refreshed.

One of the best ways to do this is to plan ahead and create a routine that's designed to help you fall asleep faster and sleep better through the night.

Here are six things you can do to make that happen:

1. **Schedule it:** A set bedtime isn't just for children. Our bodies like routines. That means having a set time to call it a day will quickly set your internal clock to start preparing for bed at a certain time.
2. **Cut the caffeine:** If you're drinking that afternoon cup of coffee less than eight hours before bedtime, you could be keeping yourself awake at night. Caffeine stays in your system for several hours and could be one of the reasons you can't sleep.
3. **Step away from the TV and your smartphone:** Blue lights from our TV screens, laptops, and phones halt the production of melatonin, the hormone that tells your brain it's time to go to sleep.
4. **Try some tryptophan:** If you like a bedtime snack, a little bit of protein combined with a healthy carbohydrate can help you get to sleep faster, stay asleep, and feel less sleepy the next day.
5. **Keep it cool:** Turning the temperature down to between 60 and 67 degrees will work with your body's internal clock to cool you down, which leads to deeper sleep.
6. **Lessen your lighting:** The darker the room, the better you'll sleep. If you're using your smartphone as an alarm clock, set it to airplane mode and turn it screen down. You can also put away the night lights and use filtered curtains.

By increasing the quality of your sleep, you can help your waking hours be healthier and more productive.

Contact your broker or Anthem Sales representative to find out how the SOCA Benefit Plan can help your employees.

* American Academy of Sleep Medicine: *Healthy Sleep Habits* (accessed February 2022): sleepeducation.org.