

Strategies to Promote Sleep: And Why Winter is Ripe for Strengthening Sleep Habits

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Today's Session

1. **Re-Cap Sleep Data in the US**
2. **Science-based Tools to Promote Healthy Sleep**
3. **Lean into the Short, Cold, Winter Days**
4. **Yoga Nidra Practice**

Recap: Sleep Struggles in the U.S.

- Findings from National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) 2020 Data
 - About 2 out of 3 US adults report sufficient sleep (66.0 % of adult women and 64.5 % of adult men)
 - 14.5% of adults had trouble falling asleep and 17.8% of adults had trouble staying asleep
 - Differences seen by gender, race/ethnicity and SES
 - Not much change in past 20-50 years^{1,2}
- Covid-Somnia
 - Slight increase in sleep QUANTITY but negative impact on sleep QUALITY.^{3,4,5}
 - Also increase in sleep-disorders, esp among those recovering from Covid and also healthcare workers.^{4,5}

Tools to Support Healthy Sleep

1. Prioritize sleep daily.
2. Establish consistent sleep and wake times.
3. Create a sleep-friendly environment.
4. Shift your nervous system.
5. Explore technologies.
6. Follow natural circadian rhythms.
7. Consult with physician.



A DAY THAT LEADS TO YOUR BEST NIGHT'S SLEEP

Thinking about sleep when it's time to lay your head on the pillow is actually too late. Try these little strategies, from Johns Hopkins sleep expert Rachel Salas, M.D., throughout the day to encourage better sleep at night.

IN THE MORNING

EAT BREAKFAST BY A WINDOW OR OUTDOORS—
THE SUN HELPS RESET YOUR BODY'S CIRCADIAN CLOCK.



Make your bed. People who do are more likely to sleep better at night.



Wake at the same time every morning, including weekends and holidays.

IN THE AFTERNOON



EXERCISE AT LUNCH. EARLY WORKOUTS MAY SACRIFICE SLEEP, AND THOSE WITHIN 3 HOURS OF BED MAY KEEP YOU AWAKE.



CUT CAFFEINE BY 4 P.M.—OR NOON IF SENSITIVE. ITS EFFECTS CAN LINGER FOR 4 HOURS OR MORE.



IF YOU NEED A NAP, TAKE IT BEFORE 3 P.M., AND KEEP IT TO 30 MINUTES OR LESS.

IN THE EVENING



USE LAMPS AND DIMMERS. BRIGHT OVERHEAD LIGHTS TRICK YOUR BRAIN INTO THINKING IT'S STILL DAYTIME.



KEEP SHOWERS OR BATHS WARM (NOT HOT). ALSO TURN DOWN THE THERMOSTAT A FEW DEGREES TO MIMIC YOUR NIGHTTIME DROP IN BODY TEMP.



TURN OFF TECH 30 MINUTES BEFORE BED. BLUE LIGHT AND CONSTANT STIMULATION MAKE IT TOUGH TO WIND DOWN.



HAVE A LIGHT BEFORE-BED SNACK—YOGURT OR FRUIT—IF HUNGER OFTEN WAKES YOU IN THE NIGHT.



STICK TO THE SAME BEDTIME—OR VARY IT BY NO MORE THAN AN HOUR.

...A Good Night Sleep Starts When You First Awake

1. Yoga nidra or non-sleep deep rest (NSDR)
2. Reclined position (could elevate legs)
3. Relaxing environment
 - ✓ Comfort
 - ✓ Muscle relaxation
 - ✓ Quiet
 - ✓ Dark
 - ✓ Warm
 - ✓ Light pressure on eye bones
 - ✓ Permission and time to rest

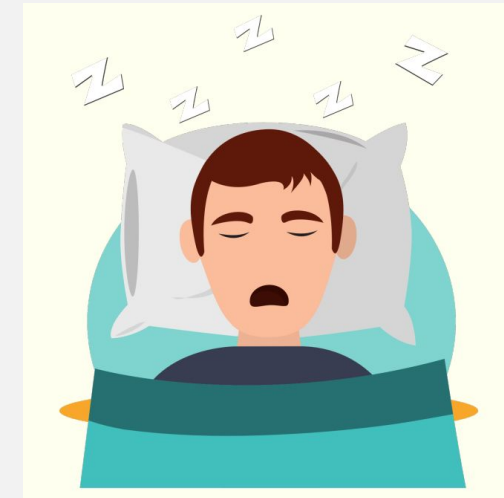


Lean into the Short, Cold Winter Days



1. Embrace the time to slow down and hibernate.
2. Use the shorter days to strengthen relaxation response and sleep habits.
3. Naturally boost melatonin levels with the darkness.
4. Get your morning dose of sunlight.
5. Use sunlight and movement to ward off Seasonal Affect Disorder.⁷ (Consult with physician if needed.)

- Simple Ways to Enhance Your Sleep Habits *(Infographic)*
<https://go.nih.gov/a5RF05V>
- What Consists of a Good Nights Sleep? *(Infographic)*
<https://go.nih.gov/1h3sILH>
- Sleep Playlists
<https://go.nih.gov/1db8l5S>
- Make Space for Mindfulness: 5 Tips *(Poster)*
<https://go.nih.gov/uqXfTqb>
- Grounding Activity to Manage Stress *(Infographic)*
<https://go.nih.gov/DmOxzKB>



Source: OD Resilience Through Well-Being Campaign

Helping NIH employees support comprehensive well-being: work, family, community

<https://go.nih.gov/kjeJ6iV>

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Wellness@NIH Facebook group

Learn about upcoming wellness events, webinars, and resources! For NIH employees only.

[Learn More](#)

Wellness Resources & On-Demand Programming

A summary of wellness resources and on-demand programming from NIH, including and a few federal wellness resources and free university-related mindfulness apps at your fingertips.

Physical Wellness

NIH Recreation and Welfare Fitness Program [Schedule of Monthly Classes](#)

[Bicycle Commuting, Riding Tips, and the Health Benefits of Bicycling](#)

[Heart Healthy Tips - Exercises & Myths, Facts about Your Hips & Other Good Ways & Reasons to](#)

[Keep Your Heart Happy](#)

[Workplace Ergonomics: How a Proper Workstation Set-up Can Help Prevent Common](#)

[Musculoskeletal Pain](#)

[Posture in the Workplace](#)

[Three Home Exercises for Back Pain](#)

[Yoga at Your Desk](#)

[Chair Yoga Guide: Chair Yoga Flow video](#)

[Yoga for Lower Back Pain](#) and complimentary [slides](#)

Link:

<https://go.nih.gov/vSlxkqi>

Nutritional Wellness

[Healthy Cooking Tips: Cooking Healthy with Color](#)

[Nutrition Knowledge for the 9-5](#)



Q&A...Let's Practice!



References:

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6. American Academy of Sleep Medicine (2021). [Sleep Prioritization Survey 2021 COVID-somnia Results \(aasm.org\)](https://aasm.org)
7. National Institute of Mental Health (2021). [Publications About Seasonal Affect Disorder.](#)