GUIDE TO GOOD SLEEP

Sleep is fundamental to good health. Try these tips to make your sleep more restful.

TIP	HOW IT HELPS YOU SLEEP
MOVE MORE	Being active tires you out, helping you fall asleep faster and sleep more soundly. Since your core body temperature needs to cool as part of the metabolic process of falling asleep, finish any vigorous exercise at least three hours before bedtime.
LIGHTEN UP EVENING MEALS	Eat dinner several hours before bedtime and avoid foods at night that cause indigestion. If you get hungry at night, snack lightly on foods that you know won't disturb your sleep.
AVOID CAFFEINE, ALCOHOL, AND NICOTINE	Caffeine and nicotine are stimulants that can keep you awake and decrease the quality of your sleep. Avoid caffeine after midday if possible. Although alcohol can cause initial drowsiness that makes you fall asleep faster, when consumed heavily it lowers the overall quality of your sleep.
MAKE YOUR BEDROOM A SLEEP-INDUCING ENVIRONMENT	Leave your devices in another room. Research has shown that blue light emitted from the screens of smartphones and computers disrupts sleep patterns and decreases the body's production of melatonin—a hormone that regulates sleep cycles. Aim for a quiet, dark, cool environment for sound sleep.
PURGE YOUR WORRIES	If you tend to take your problems to bed, try writing them down—and then putting them aside. Jot down any unresolved issues or unfinished items on your mental to-do list before you go to bed. Purging your working memory will make it easier to fall asleep and stay asleep.
KEEP A CONSISTENT SLEEP SCHEDULE	Try to stick as closely as possible to your routine on weekends to avoid a Monday-morning sleep deficit. Going to bed and waking up at the same time each day sets the body's "internal clock".