**WebMD** 

**CHECK YOUR SYMPTOMS PRICES** 

FIND A DOCTOR

FIND LOWEST DRUG

SIGN IN

SUBSCRIBE

**HEALTH** 

**DRUGS &** LIVING SUPPLEMENT SHEALTHY **FAMILY** PREGNANCY **NEWS & EXPERTS** 

Q **SEARCH** 

Advertisement ads

# **SLEEP DISORDERS** HOME

News

Reference

Slideshows

Ouizzes

Videos

Questions & Answers

Message Boards

Medications

Find a Neurologist

# **SLEEP DISORDERS GUIDE**

Good Sleep Habits Sleep Disorders Other Sleep Problems What Affects Sleep **Tests & Treatments** Tools & Resources

# **RELATED TO SLEEP DISORDERS**

Circadian Rhythm **Drug Interaction Checker** Insomnia Interrupted Sleep Restless Legs Syndrome Sleep Apnea Snoring **Teeth Grinding** 

### Sleep Disorders > Feature Stories >

**SLEEP DISORDER TRENDS:** Sleep Apnea Leg Cramps Insomnia | Restless Legs Syndrome | Narcolepsy | Snoring

# **How to Sleep Better**

'Sleep Hygiene' Solutions for Better Sleep

By Michael J. Breus, PhD

















FROM THE WEBMD ARCHIVES (1)

From having occasional difficulty sleeping to insomnia, there is a lot you can do to get a better night's sleep, feel refreshed when you awake, and remain alert throughout the day. It's called hygiene" and refers to those practices, habits, and environmental factors that are critically important for sound sleep . And most of it is under your control.

There are four general areas important to sleep hygiene:

- Our circadian rhythm, or 24-hour cycle
- Aging

### TODAY ON WEBMD



Fight Fatigue

12 reasons why you're tired -- and how to fight them.



Sleep Apnea

Can you tell myth from fact?



Zzzzzzzzz

What do your dreams say about vou?



Wake-Up Tips

11 ways to make the morning easier.



### RECOMMENDED FOR YOU



What Do Your Dreams Say About You?

Track Your Sleep More Related Topics

ADVERTISEMENT

Psychological stressors -- those factors can cause difficulty falling asleep and disturb the quality of your sleep

 Common social or recreational drugs like nicotine, caffeine, and alcohol

CONTINUE READING BELOW

### YOU MIGHT LIKE

# **Circadian Rhythm**

We all have a day-night cycle of about 24 hours called the circadian rhythm. It greatly influences when we sleep and the quantity and the quality of our sleep. The more stable and consistent our circadian rhythm is, the better our sleep. This cycle may be altered by the timing of various factors, including naps, bedtime, exercise, and especially exposure to light (from traveling across time zones to staring at that laptop in bed at night).

# **Aging**

Aging also plays a role in sleep and sleep hygiene. After the age of 40 our sleep patterns change, and we have many more nocturnal awakenings than in our younger years. These awakenings not only directly affect the quality of our sleep, but they also interact with any other condition that may cause arousals or awakenings, like the withdrawal syndrome that occurs after drinking alcohol close to bedtime . The more awakenings we have at night, the more



SLIDESHOW

How Your Sleep Position Affects Your Health



ARTICLE ADHD and Sleep Problems



Why You Need ZZZs



Foods That Help or Harm Your Sleep



**TOOLS** 

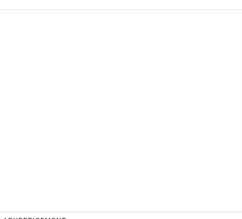
Still Awake? Get Personalized Tips to Help You Sleep



Insomnia? Test Your Sleep Smarts



**SLIDESHOW** Sleep Problems: Your Essential Guide



ADVERTISEMENT

### **TOOLS & RESOURCES**

Why You Snore and How to Stop

Jobs That Wreck Your Sleep

Why You Need to Get Enough Sleep

10 Ways to Rest With a Cold

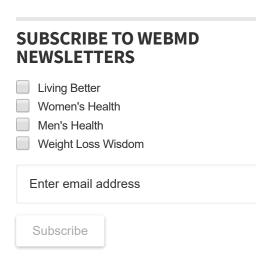
likely we will awaken feeling unrefreshed and unrestored.

Video: Yoga Moves for Better Sleep

What's the Best Sleep Position?

# **Psychological Stressors**

Psychological stressors like deadlines, exams, marital conflict, and job crises may prevent us from falling asleep or wake us from sleep throughout the night. It takes time to "turn off" all the noise from the day. No way around it. If you work right up to the time you turn out the lights, or are reviewing all the day's events and planning tomorrow (sound familiar?), you simply cannot just "flip a switch" and drop off to a blissful night's sleep.



By clicking Submit, I agree to the WebMD Terms & Conditions & Privacy Policy and understand that I may opt out of WebMD subscriptions at any time.



### **TOP PICKS**

Why You Snore and How to Stop

Video: Yoga for Better Sleep

What's Causing Your Aches?

Your Sleep Position and Your Health What's the Best Sleep Position?

13 Jobs That Can Wreck Your Sleep

**FURTHER READING** 

Slideshow: A Visual Guide to Sleep Disorders

Slideshow: Insomnia Myths and Facts

Sleep and Aging

Insomnia
Quiz: Test
Your Smarts
on Poor Sleep
and How to
Fix It

Quiz: The Science of Sleep

10 Ways to Reset Your Sleep Cycle

A Wearable Device for

# Sleepy Drivers

Insomnia Topics

### Health Solutions FROM OUR SPONSORS

Cancer Treatments
Penis Curved When Erect
Live Better With Diabetes
Therapy at Home?

Understand Immunotherapy Painful Knees? Is TAVR Right For You? Bent Fingers? Immediate Pain Relief Wearable Health Treatment To Fit You Screen for Lung Cancer Lower Back Pain Relief Managing Diabetes Smartphone Health Apps

### More from WebMD

Tips to Better Manage Your Migraine
The Stress of Caregiving
Healthy Cat Tips
Immunotherapy for Cancer

What Inhalers Do to Your Body Could You Have Tinnitus? 8 Ways to Avoid Heart Attack Living Better With Migraine How to Prevent Meningitis in Your Teen Tips for Your Dog's Health Diabetes Assessment Avoid Allergy Triggers
Treating Advanced Prostate Cancer
5 Things That Spike Your Blood Sugar









### **Policies**

Privacy Policy Editorial Policy Advertising Policy Correction Policy Terms of Use

### About

Contact Us
About WebMD
Careers
Newsletter
Corporate

WebMD Health Services

Site Map Accessibility

### WebMD Network

Medscape
Medscape Reference
MedicineNet
eMedicineHealth
RxList
OnHealth
BootsWebMD
WebMDRx
First Aid
WebMD Magazine

WebMD Magazine
WebMD Health Record
Dictionary

Physician Directory

## Our Apps

WebMD Mobile
WebMD App
Pregnancy
Baby
Allergy
WebMD Magazine
Medscape
TheHeart

### For Advertisers

Advertise with Us Advertising Policy









© 2005 - 2017 WebMD, LLC. All rights reserved.

WebMD does not provide medical advice, diagnosis or treatment.

See additional information.