



# Sleep Hygiene Guide

## (Love Your Melatonin!)



Sleep hygiene refers to healthy sleep habits. Good sleep hygiene is important because of how crucial getting good sleep is for your mental and physical health, as well as your overall quality of life. Your behaviours during the day — not just before you go to bed — can affect how well you sleep. Your food and drink choices, schedule, evening routine, and many other activities all play a part in your ability to sleep.

Sleep is a complex interplay between numerous systems in your body. Steroid hormone cortisol (a stress hormone released from your adrenal glands) and the hormone Melatonin (released in response to darkness from your pineal gland) both play a role in good quality sleep. Cortisol is naturally at its peak in the early morning and gradually decreases throughout day. Melatonin slowly rises throughout the day and peaks around 9pm to induce sleepiness. If cortisol is raised due to increased stress response, melatonin does not rise adequately to induce sleepiness. This is why it is critical to manage stress to support good sleep.

1. Keep a consistent bedtime and wake time
2. Manage your stress before bedtime comes: Give yourself moments throughout the day to practice mindfulness and process all of the incoming information. Journaling, meditation, mindful movement and silence can help.
3. Aim to eat dinner at least 3 hours before bedtime
4. Dim lights in your space as much as possible 2-3 hours before bedtime
5. Eliminate use of screens at least an hour before bedtime - power down all artificial light from your smartphone, television or computer screen. Since melatonin is sensitive to light, if your body is exposed to light even after sunset, it may not be able to enter the sleep phase and prepare your body for good sleep.
6. Reduce or eliminate caffeine intake. No caffeine after 12pm if you are having sleep issues.
7. Create your own relaxing bedtime routine ½ hour to 1 hour before bedtime
8. Keep electronic devices out of the bedroom. Bedrooms are for sleeping and sex only.
9. Regular exercise helps with good quality sleep, although avoid vigorous workouts later in the day, try stretching or yoga instead.
10. Ensure your bedroom is cool, dark and quiet. Consider ear plugs or an eye mask if needed. There are many light blocking eye masks available now.
11. If you need to be on screens in the evening, consider wearing blue light blocking glasses.
12. If you nap during the day, keep it to 20 minutes or less

For personalised support with sleep and stress reduction, contact Kama Health...