**Northern Lakes**
COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY

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Healthy sleep habits can make a big difference in your quality of life. Healthy sleep habits are often referred to as good "sleep hygiene." Practice the following sleep recommendations consistently:

- **Stick to a sleep schedule** of the same bedtime and wake up time, even on the weekends. This helps to regulate your body's "clock" and could help you fall asleep and stay asleep for the night.

- **Practice a relaxing bedtime ritual.** A relaxing routine before bedtime (conducted away from bright lights) helps separate your sleep time from activities that can cause excitement, stress, or anxiety, and of which can make it more difficult to fall or stay asleep.

- **If you have trouble sleeping, avoid naps, especially in the afternoon.**

- **Exercise daily** with your healthcare provider's approval. Vigorous exercise is best, but even light exercise is better than no activity. Exercise at any time of day, but not at the expense of your sleep.

- **Evaluate your room.** Design your sleep environment to establish the conditions you need for sleep. Your bedroom should be cool—between 60 and 67 degrees—and free from any noise or light. Check your room for noises or other distractions. Consider using blackout curtains, eye shades, ear plugs, "white noise" machines, humidifiers, fans, and other devices.

- **Sleep on a comfortable mattress and pillow.**

- **Use bright light in the morning to help manage your circadian rhythms.** Avoid bright light in the evening and expose yourself to morning sunlight.



- **Avoid alcohol, cigarettes, caffeine and heavy meals in the evening**. Alcohol, cigarettes and caffeine can disrupt sleep. Eating big or spicy meals can cause discomfort from indigestion that can make it hard to sleep. If you can, avoid eating large meals for two to three hours before bedtime.

- **Wind down and avoid electronics before bed.** Your body needs time to shift into sleep mode, so spend the last hour before bed doing a calming activity such as reading. For some people, using an electronic device such as a laptop can make it hard to fall asleep, because the light from the screens is very activating to the brain.

- **If you can't sleep, go into another room and do something relaxing until you feel tired.** It is best to take computers and televisions out of the sleeping environment. Use your bed only for sleep to strengthen the association between bed and sleep.

- **If you're still having trouble sleeping,** don't hesitate to speak with your healthcare provider or to find a sleep professional. You may also benefit from recording your sleep in a Sleep Diary to help you better evaluate patterns or issues you may see with your sleep or sleeping habits.

Credit: National Sleep Foundation 2019

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