THE NEW SCHOOL

WELLNESS AND
HEALTH PROMOTION

80 Fifth Avenue, 3rd floor
NY, NY 10011
212.229.1671, option 4
wellness@newschool.edu

TOP TEN TIPS FOR BETTER SLEEP[i]

1. Keep a regular sleep and wake schedule. This REALLY IS # 1.

2. Make a "wind-down" routine to relax and get stressors out of your mind before getting into bed (listen to music, meditate).

3. Avoid long naps (more than 1 hour) during the day. Naps will interrupt the sleep/wake schedule and make it harder to fall asleep that night.

4. Avoid caffeine 4-6 hours before bedtime.

5. If you're hungry before bed, have milk, another dairy product, turkey, or a light carbohydrate snack. Avoid chocolate or other foods with sugar or caffeine.

6. If you lie in bed for more than 15 minutes, get up and do something boring (like read a textbook). DON'T get up and watch TV.

7. Don't look at the clock while trying to fall asleep - this only increases anxiety about not being able to sleep and makes it worse.

8. If you're feeling stressed, write out your stressors, make a to-do list, or try some relaxation techniques (like deep breathing).

9. Train your body to get drowsy at night: take a warm bath about 90 minutes before getting into bed (not a shower - this often wakes us up), and use dim lights in the room.

10. No computers right before bedtime. This is a hard one, but the light interrupts the circadian rhythm and often makes us stay up past the point of feeling drowsy/sleepy.

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[i]References: Loyola University Chicago, Learning

Assistance, 2005 Updated: May 2011