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# Tips for better sleep

By Latashni Gobi Nathan  
latagn@sph.com.sg

Have you had days when you get up for work and feel and look like you have not slept at all?

If you wake up every day feeling tired, examine your habits. What you do, eat and drink has an impact on your sleep and rest.

Here are some things to take note of.

## CAFFEINE

Caffeine wakes your body up because it blocks sleep-inducing chemicals like adenosine.

Clinical dietitian Jaclyn Reutens said caffeine may cause insomnia in people, resulting in poor sleep and insufficient rest.

"Caffeine resides in your body for about six hours before it is eliminated. Drinking it at night can result in sleep disturbance," said Ms Reutens.

## ALCOHOL

Ms Reutens said alcohol does not improve sleep quality. It may make you fall asleep more easily but it

also causes you to have rapid eye movement (REM) sleep.

She said: "Sleep is when your body restores itself. Any disruption of that will cause you to wake up feeling unrested. The more alcohol you take before bed, the more disrupted your sleep is likely to be."

## WATER

Drinking sufficient water keeps your skin hydrated. But for uninterrupted sleep, avoid drinking too much water before bedtime.

Ms Reutens said: "Drink water during the day to get rid of toxins, but avoid drinking water one hour before bedtime as you may need a toilet break in the middle of the night. Drinking less water at night also allows your kidneys and liver to rest better."

## WARM MILK

A glass of warm milk relaxes you and prepares you for sleep. This does not just work for babies but can help anybody who needs to sleep.

Milk and other dairy products

contain tryptophan which helps to produce sleep-inducing chemicals – serotonin and melatonin.

## OILY OR GREASY FOODS

Not only is such food generally bad for your health, they are harder to digest.

Ms Reutens said: "Eating too much fatty and oily food at night results in your digestive system working overtime. It may cause discomfort and heartburn, which disrupts your sleep cycle."

## OTHER TIPS

Avoid exercising too late at night or just before you head to bed, as your body needs time to relax.

Ensure you have good pillows to elevate your head and that your body has good support.

Do a quick 10-minute workout in the morning. Not only will it wake you up, it will add colour to your face. Exercising regularly gives you a healthy glow.

Shower with cold and hot water. The temperature change will improve blood circulation, giving you a healthy glow.