



Free Guide

# HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR SLEEP HYGIENE

## Hi, my name is Renée

I'm a certified health coach, wellness educator and lover of animals and walking on the beach.

I offer one to one and group sessions, facilitate classes, teach workshops for individuals, groups, private or professional organizations and provide wellness retreats. These events include education on how to implement better food and life choices to create healthier homes, work spaces and improved well-being.

I utilize an interactive, informative and fun approach to facilitate active learning and individual empowerment. This approach allows participants to engage in the discussion and interact with other attendees through various exercises and brainstorming. Participants also receive valuable information to take with them, furthering their knowledge after the workshop.



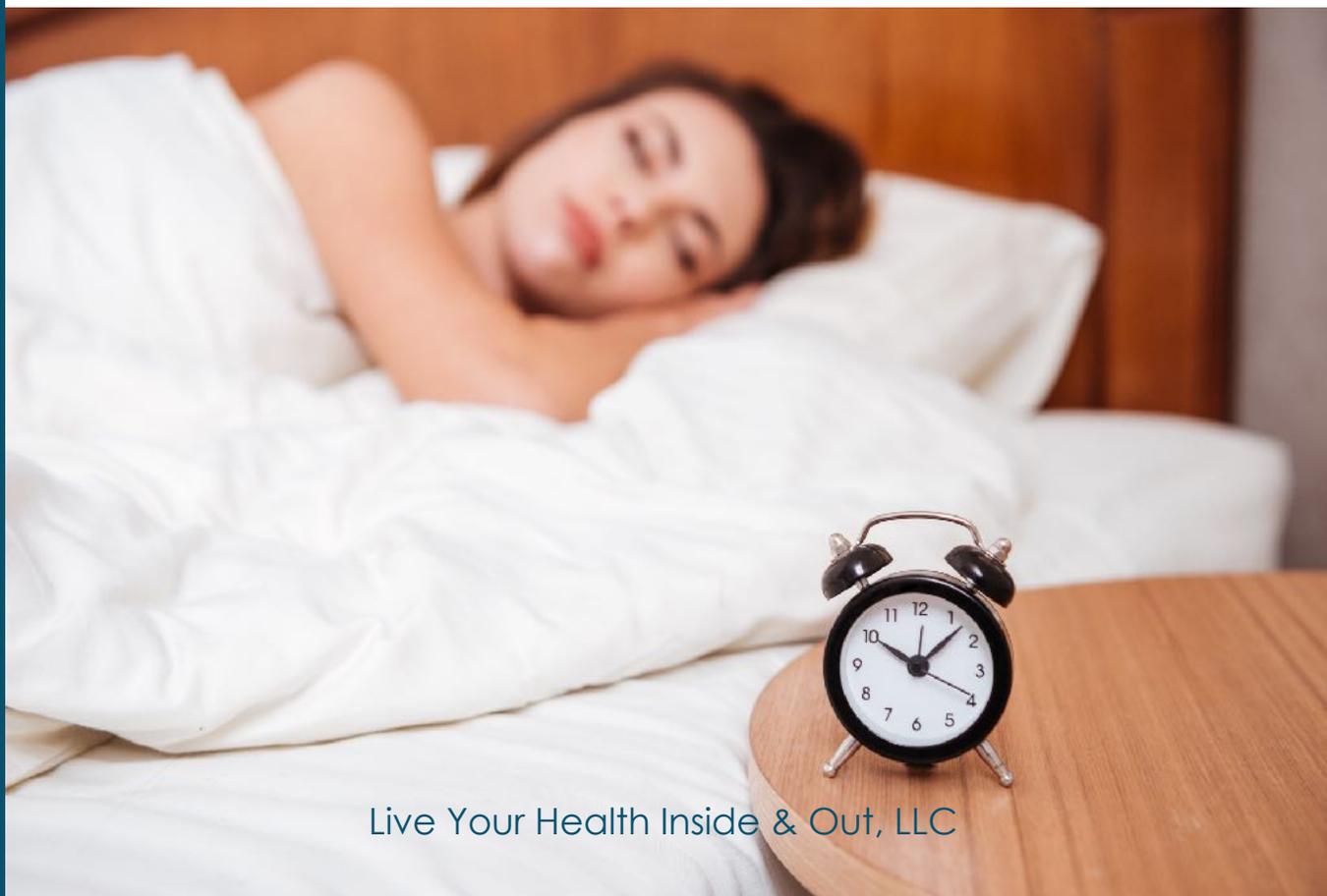
Live Your Health Inside & Out, LLC

## How to Improve Your Sleep Hygiene

Getting a good night's sleep can be elusive for many of us and there are lots of things that can potentially disrupt your sleep patterns and make it hard to drift off into a natural sleep. Sleep hygiene can make a lot of difference though and introducing the right habits into your bedtime routine can help you to sleep better and improve how well you sleep too. These tips will help you to improve your sleep hygiene and say goodbye to sleepless nights!

### Make Your Bedroom Conducive for Sleep

If your bedroom is quiet, dark and at the right temperature , you're a lot more likely to sleep well. It's not always possible to get rid of distractions and interferences from outside but earplugs, blackout shades, eye masks and good ventilation can all help to turn your room into the ideal environment for sleep.



## Your going to bed routine

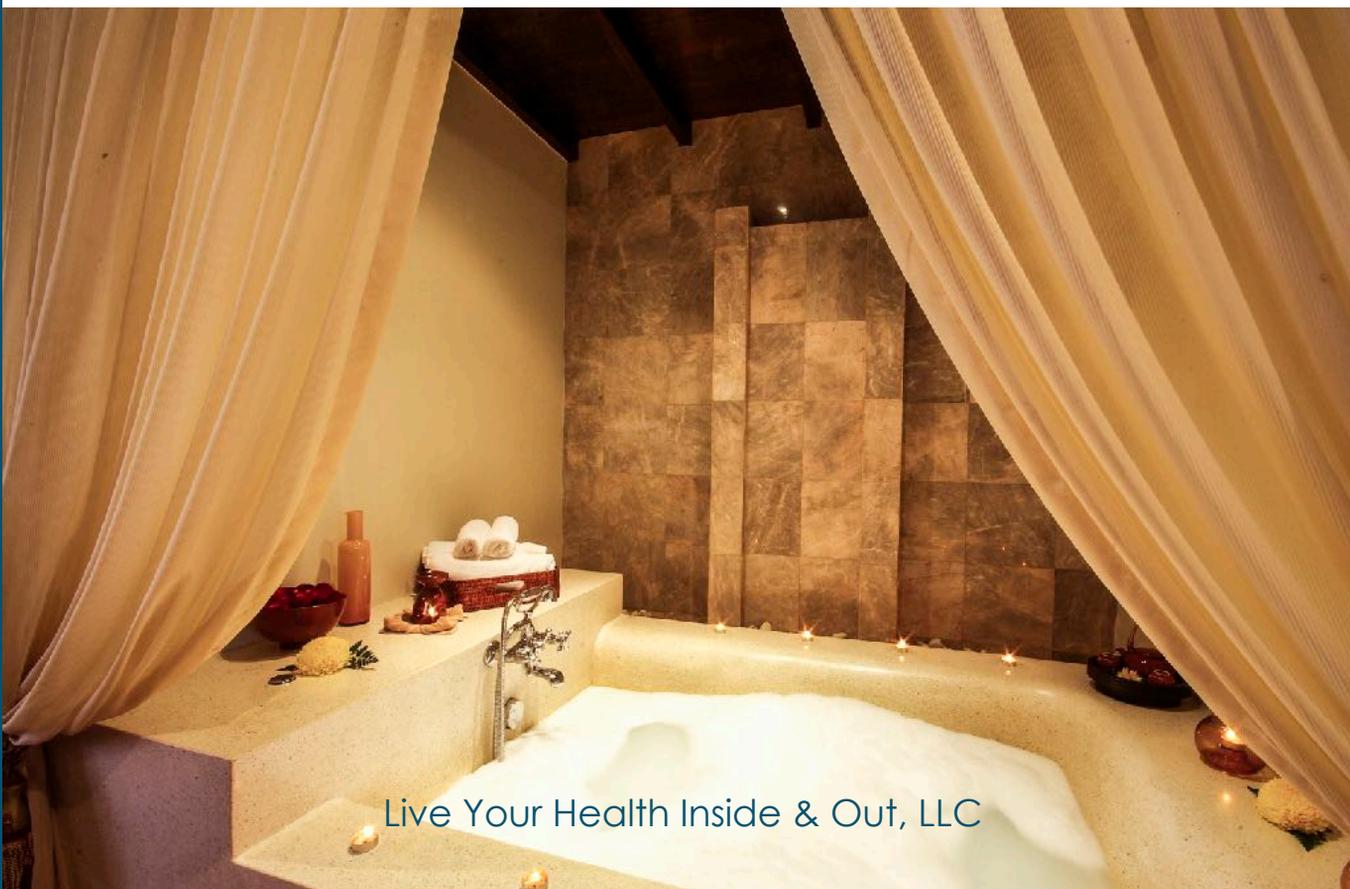
How you prepare for bed can make a lot of difference for how well you might sleep once you slip between the sheets.

Having a bedtime routine that relaxes you and gets you in the right frame of mind for sleep is a big part of sleep hygiene.

A relaxing bath can help and has the added bonus of regulating your body temperature. The rise in your body temperature followed by the subsequent fall afterwards gets your body ready for sleep. Adding some Epsom salts to your bath is a great move.

Other good options include reading or doing relaxation exercises such as meditation or mindfulness. Light exercise such as yoga can also be beneficial but don't do anything too strenuous so it can still have a relaxing effect.

Find yourself thinking about lots of different things in the night and struggling to sleep as a result? Try making to-do lists for everything you need to do the next day so you can switch off more easily. On a similar note, keeping a regular schedule with your sleep can also help. Going to bed at the same time every night and getting up at a set time in the morning gets your body's internal clock into a regular routine.



## Avoiding Caffeine and Alcohol

Drinking anything with caffeine in it can be a bad move in the run up to bedtime. Caffeine is a stimulant and this means it can keep you awake at night - not what you're after at bedtime!

When you drink caffeine is really important and the cut off time is a lot earlier than a lot of people realize. It takes a good while for the effects of caffeine to slow down so ideally, you need to stop drinking anything with caffeine at least 4 hours before bedtime. If you can avoid it for longer than this, definitely try to do so as the further away from bedtime you drink it, the more likely you are to sleep better. Coffee and tea are the obvious culprits but don't forget about cola and even chocolate as less obvious sources.

Don't be tempted to use alcohol as a way to relax before bed. Like caffeine, it's a stimulant and is a lot more likely to keep you awake than help you to sleep. You may feel sleepy to begin with but after that the stimulant effect kicks in and you'll be wide awake again.

## No Blue Lights!

Have you heard of "blue light" from screens and devices? Smartphones, tablets, laptops and televisions all emit this and it is very bad news as far as sleep is concerned. "Blue light" affects your body's production of melatonin - the "sleep hormone". When levels of melatonin are disrupted, your sleep suffers. It fools your brain into thinking it's not really bedtime. Switch off your devices at least an hour before bed to avoid the "blue light" effect.

If you're still worried about the impact of "blue light", you can go a step further with special glasses that block it out.

## Timing Your Exercise Plans

Exercise can be a really important part of sleep hygiene and can help to improve your sleep patterns. According to some studies, it can also help you to fall asleep faster.

It's easy to get it wrong though and it can also work against you if you work out too close to bedtime. Anything that is physically stimulating can encourage your body to produce more of the stress hormone, cortisol. This only serves to make you more alert and awake so it's definitely counterproductive at bedtime.

As a general rule of thumb, try not to exercise in the three hours before bedtime so that your body's cortisol production can go down in the meantime or do it earlier in the day so you can get the effects but it isn't likely to cause issues for your sleep. You don't necessarily need to do a lot of exercise to help with sleep hygiene - even 10 minutes of fairly intensive aerobic/cardio exercise is enough. Just not too late in the day!

## What to Eat for Good Sleep

Some foods can help to produce more melatonin and get you in the mood for a good night's sleep. Stock up on walnuts, almonds, cheese and tuna to guide you towards sleep.

When you eat is just as important as what you eat. Having a meal too close to bedtime doesn't give your digestive system much chance to slow down, especially if you're eating foods that are fatty, spicy, fried or rich. Heartburn is also more likely with these kind of foods. Try to finish your last meal at least a couple of hours before you go to bed.

