

– SLEEP TIPS –

Following on from yesterday's FB Live, here are the tips I mentioned

1. Don't drink alcohol before bed.

Alcohol doesn't, contrary to what people believe, help you fall asleep or sleep better. In fact, it seriously interrupts the deep REM sleep we need.

My suggestion is to avoid any alcohol past 5pm.

2. Avoid caffeine (and other stimulants) 6-8 hours before bed.

This includes coffee, energy drinks, even diet sodas—they all contain some amount of caffeine and caffeine is a stimulant whose effects can take up to ~8 hours to wear off.

==> I wrote about caffeine here: <http://physiqonomics.com/caffeine-illustrated/>

If you must use a pre-workout and you train in the late afternoon/evenings, use a stimulant-free one.

3. Avoid drinking too much fluid in the evenings.

You'll be forced to wake up during the night to go to the toilet which will inevitably mess with your sleep, especially if you have to turn on the lights—this will mess with melatonin secretion.

4. Avoid blue light in the evenings.

Blue light is emitted from your mobile devices (phones, tablets, etc.), computers/laptops, and TVs and it halts the production of melatonin.

This makes it harder for you to fall asleep.

5. Don't keep your mobile phone in your bedroom.

This is for two reasons.

a) See point 4

b) You want to unwind and relax in the hours leading to bedtime. If you're checking your emails or scrolling through FB--you won't be able to do this. Especially if you read or see something that stresses you out. Leave it for the morning, it can wait.

6. Set a consistent sleep schedule (including weekends)

This will ensure your body knows the difference between 'wake' time and 'sleep' time. If you have an erratic sleep schedule (this includes when you wake up as much as when you fall asleep) you're throwing your body for a loop, and you'll find it harder to fall asleep.

Be super stringent with this: go to sleep at the same time EVERY DAY and wake up at the same time EVERY DAY (yes, including weekends).

7. TAKE NAPS.

As a species, our 'natural' sleep pattern is biphasic: sleeping during two periods over 24 hours.

This means that, if possible, you should take a short 15-30 minute nap during the day alongside your 7-9 hours sleep during the night.

BUT: don't take naps too late into the afternoon or close to when you actually go to sleep as this can affect your ability to fall asleep at night.

My recommendations are to take a nap between 12-2pm (this seems to be the sweet spot) and no later than 3pm.

8. You NEED 7-9 hours of sleep

I use to believe that how much sleep one needs was highly individual. Turns out this isn't true. You should be trying your best to get 7-9 hours of sleep per night.

Interestingly, sleeping too much can have just as bad health consequences as not sleeping enough. Which is why the sweet spot is around that 7-9 hour mark.

9. Room temperature

Studies have shown the ideal room temperature for sleep is around 18°C (65°F).

Interestingly, you can still fall asleep if the temperature is lower than this BUT warmer than this, and sleep struggles.

10. Taking a hot shower/bath before bed can help you fall asleep

Due to the drop in body temperature when you come out of the shower/bath.

11. Get sunlight exposure

In [this](#) podcast, Dr. Amy Bender, professor of Kinesiology at the University of Calgary pointed out that, *“Those people who got light exposure before noon – eg. taking a 20 minute walk outside – showed that they had better sleep quality. So the more light exposure you can get before noon the better the sleep quality is going to be.”*

12. Read a book

Instead of browsing Facebook or Instagram before bed, read a book. (Refer back to point 4.)

13. Eating before bed

You want to go to bed reasonably satiated. Meaning, you're not stuffed and uncomfortable, neither starving.

My recommendation is to have a high-protein and moderate carb dinner ~2 hours before bed.