



# THE EAP CONNECTION

## Nine No-Nonsense Tips for Catching ZZZs

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the average adult needs at least seven hours of sleep a night to ensure their best health and wellbeing.<sup>1</sup> Poor sleep can affect mood and concentration, and long-term sleep issues can lead to cardiovascular issues and depression. If you struggle with falling asleep or toss and turn at night, it might be time to adjust your sleep habits.

Here are a few helpful tips to support a good night's sleep:

**Establish a bedtime routine.** Engage in relaxing activities, such as taking a warm bath, reading a book, or having a cup of decaffeinated tea, to help settle down before bedtime. It is also beneficial to establish consistent times for going to bed and waking every day; a sleep schedule helps your body better regulate.

**Avoid caffeine or stimulants.** Limit caffeine, such as coffee, energy drinks, or nicotine, as bedtime approaches. Also be mindful of alcohol intake around bedtime as this can cause sleep disturbances.

**Create a peaceful sleep environment.** Your bedroom should be dark, relaxing, and comfortable. Snuggle up with cozy pillows and blankets. The temperature of your room can also influence the quality of your sleep. The National Sleep Foundation recommends a room temperature around 65° for optimal sleep.<sup>2</sup>

**Limit electronics in the bedroom.** Many people fall asleep with the TV on, but the blue light from TVs, cellphones, and tablets can negatively impact your sleep. The light emitted from these devices stimulates your brain, causing your body to think it is daytime. If you need to have background noise to fall asleep, try using a sound machine or running a fan in the room.

**Exercise.** Taking time to exercise on a regular basis can have a positive impact on sleep. Even as little as 10 minutes of light exercise a day can make a difference!

**Enjoy some sunshine.** Natural light is important in regulating the sleep-wake cycle.

**Pay attention to your diet.** Foods that are spicy, rich, deep-fried, or highly carbonated can cause indigestion and heartburn which in turn can disrupt sleep. If you plan to indulge in a rich meal, try to allow plenty of time between mealtime and bedtime.

**Napping.** A daytime nap can be refreshing and reinvigorating. However, try to limit it to 30 minutes or less for adults as too much napping can cause sleeplessness at night.

**Use relaxation techniques.** If you struggle with falling asleep at night, relaxation techniques, such as guided meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, deep breathing, or even mindfulness exercises, can help slow down your mind and bring sleep more easily.

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2017, March 2). *How much sleep do I need?* Retrieved from [https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about\\_sleep/how\\_much\\_sleep.html](https://www.cdc.gov/sleep/about_sleep/how_much_sleep.html)  
2. National Sleep Foundation. (n.d.). *What temperature should your bedroom be?* Retrieved from <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/bedroom-environment/touch/what-temperature-should-your-bedroom-be>

### HOW TO USE YOUR EAP BENEFIT:

ERC: Counselors & Consultants is your company's Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provider. For additional information, visit our website [ERCincorp.com](http://ERCincorp.com) or call 1-800-222-8590.