**TIPS FOR A HEALTHY SLEEP ROUTINE**

**ADAPT A NIGHTLY ROUTINE**

I can't stress how important this is. There are so many ways to unwind during the day, but many of us just go directly from working on a project or scrolling through our phones directly to bed. This is OK sometimes, but doing this repeatedly isn't sending a signal to your brain that it's time to go to bed. Instead, this sends stress signals to your brain and you'll be going to bed with too much stimulation and racing thoughts. In fact, researchers have found that the light from screens can continue disrupting sleep for hours after you go to bed, explaining why sometimes you may wake up exhausted after a full nights sleep.

There are many ways to develop a nightly bedtime routine, but mine is as follows:

* turning off cell phone 1-2 hours before bed
* taking a shower/bath
* dry brushing, self oil massage
* sip a cup of tea
* 10 minutes meditation using the Calm app
* turn on my white noise machine (or iPhone app if I am traveling)
* jumping straight into bed!

This routine works for me because I can do it from anywhere (home, hotel, etc) and makes me feel peaceful, grounded, and calm before heading into dreamland.

**GET ON A CONSISTENT SLEEPING SCHEDULE.**

Going to bed and waking up at the same time is so important. Your body is a clock and works like one. Setting your circadian rhythm is extremely important, and sticking to that and honoring it. Everybody is different, but I like to head to bed around 10pm, fall asleep by 10:30, and wake up refreshed without an alarm around 5:30 or 6:00AM.

**GET OFF ELECTRONICS 1-2 HOURS BEFORE BED, AND SLEEP WITH THEM IN ANOTHER ROOM.**

This is so important, especially in this day in age. Think about it this way, the information you absorb goes directly into our conscious and subconscious. How many times have you fallen asleep to the blaring sound of television, only to wake up at 3:00AM to turn it off? Even though you are asleep, you brain and senses are still alert, so all the information you absorb (especially the few hours right before sleep!) will directly effect your sleeping behavior. Give your eyes a rest and make a promise to yourself to read in bed instead of mindlessly scrolling the internet!

Even more importantly, start sleeping with your cell phone in another room. This will remove temptations to check your phone if you wake up in the middle of the night. It's also a great habit in making your bedroom a sacred space which I talk about more below.

**CUT OFF CAFFEINE AFTER 12 NOON.**

SO important! Caffeine is a stimulant, so a cup or so in the morning is totally fair game, but a 2nd or 3rd in the afternoon can disrupt your sleeping pattern.  If you struggle with an afternoon slump, rather than grabbing a cup of coffee, try fixing yourself a tall glass of H2O, going for a walk around the block, or eating a nutrient dense snack like a [fat ball](http://www.leefromamerica.com/blog/2017/3/14/coconut-fat-balls). If you are a coffee drinker and are so fatigued around 3pm that you can't stay awake and NEED a 4th cup of coffee to make it through to dinnertime, you may have [adrenal fatigue](http://www.leefromamerica.com/blog/2017/3/28/adrenal-fatigue-my-story).

**GET THE TV OUT OF YOUR ROOM AND MAKE YOUR BED A SACRED SPACE.**

One of my favorite healthiest home tips is not owning a television at all. I know this isn't what everyone wants, but at least removing it from your bedroom makes it a sacred sleeping space only. Make a promise to yourself that you will not lay on your bed during the day or in "real people clothes". Keep electronics out of the bed as much as you can and only step into bed when you are ready to wind down. If you are used to watching TV in bed, try reading a book. They are a great way to fall asleep.

**SKIP THE LATE NIGHT WORKOUT SESSIONS.**

Studies have shown that high intensity workouts and sweat sessions too close to bedtime could potentially disrupt your sleep. Getting your heart rate up so close to bedtime gets your adrenaline pumping and sends signals to your brain to keep going.  A PM restorative candlelit yoga class or light pilates session is totally fine, but skip the 8PM spin class.  Of course, every person is different, and this may be the only time you can squeeze in a workout. However, if your schedule allows, start waking up earlier to squeeze in an AM workout, You'll be surprised to find that you have more energy throughout the day.

**GET BLACKOUT SHADES FOR YOUR BEDROOM**

Remove **EVERY** single source of light from your bedroom. Digital clocks, streetlights, cell phone lights, even night lights. They are sources of light and send signals to your brain to stay awake. If you must, buy an eye mask to remove all sources of light.

**SOME THINGS THAT HELP ME SLEEP:**

Tea in bed. I love sipping on hot herbal tea right before bed as I read.

Traditional Medicines Calm and Celestial Seasons Sleepy time or plain old peppermint are favorites!

Source: leefromamerica.com