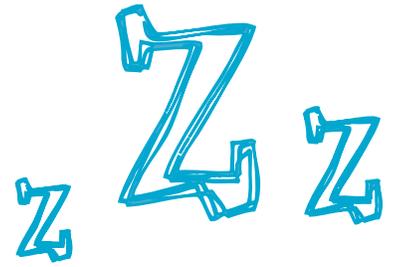# Things You Can Do to Get the Best Sleep Possible

1. Wake up and go to bed at about the same time every day (weekdays and weekends). Bedtime and wake time should not differ more than an hour or so from one day to the next.

   o Don't sleep in on weekends to "catch up" on sleep. This makes it more likely that you will have problems falling asleep at bedtime.

2. If you are very sleepy during the day, nap for 20 to 30 minutes in the early afternoon, but not too long or too late in the afternoon, or you may have difficulty falling asleep at bedtime.

3. Spend time outside every day, especially in the morning, as exposure to sunlight, or bright light, helps to keep your body's internal clock on track. If you are going to be outside for more than 15 minutes, make sure you use sunscreen.

4. Make sure your bedroom is comfortable, quiet, and dark.

   o Keep your room cool.

   o Use your bed for sleeping only (avoid studying, watching TV, playing video games, and so on).

5. Exercising regularly during the day may help you fall asleep and sleep more deeply (avoid exercising within an hour or two of bedtime).

6. Wind down at night with a warm shower, a book, or other relaxing activities.

   o Avoid stimulating activities — including vigorous exercise, loud music, video games, television, computer use and text messaging — an hour or two before bedtime.

7. Eat regular meals and don't go to bed hungry. A light snack before bed is a good idea; eating a full meal in the hour before bed is not.

8. Avoid eating or drinking products containing caffeine in the late afternoon and evening — including caffeinated sodas, coffee, tea, and chocolate.

9. Drinking alcohol disrupts sleep and may cause you to wake up throughout the night. Smoking also disturbs sleep, so you shouldn't smoke for at least an hour before bedtime — and, preferably, not at all.