# Sleep Hygiene
## for Children & Teens

A GUIDE FOR PATIENTS AND FAMILIES DURING CONCUSSION RECOVERY

Overnight sleep is one of the most important parts of concussion recovery. Make sufficient, quality sleep a priority every night.

| 7–8 hours | 30–60 min | ≤ 30 min |
|---|---|---|
| of overnight sleep | screen-free before bed | naps, only if needed, before 2 pm |

## Your Nightly Plan

1. **Keep a consistent schedule.** Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, weekends included. Improvement takes a few days, so stick with it.
2. **Aim for 7–8 hours of overnight sleep.** Recovery tends to be fastest around this amount. More is not always better: sleeping 10 or more hours a night is linked to more symptoms.[1,2]
3. **Reduce naps.** Daytime sleep is linked to slower recovery. If a nap is needed, keep it to 30 minutes or less and before 2 pm.[1]
4. **Follow the same bedtime routine** every night, like a bath, reading, or quiet music.
5. **Power down screens** 30–60 minutes before bed.
6. **Can't fall asleep after 30 minutes?** Get out of bed and do something relaxing without a screen for 10–15 minutes until drowsy. Repeat your bedtime routine if needed.

## Helpful Habits

- Keep the bedroom **cool, quiet, dark,** and comfortable, with the clock turned away.
- Keep **screens out of the bedroom** overnight, including phones.
- **Wind down** in the hour before bed: no video games, texting, rowdy play, or exercise.
- **Limit caffeine** (soda, chocolate, tea, coffee, energy drinks), especially later in the day.
- Don't go to bed **hungry or overly full.**
- **Stay active during the day** as cleared by your concussion team, and get outside in the morning.
- Try **slow, deep belly breaths** or picturing a calm place to relax.

### If sleep problems continue

Consider 1–3 mg of melatonin, a natural supplement available over the counter. For trouble **falling asleep**, take it after dinner. For trouble **staying asleep**, take it at bedtime.

### For younger children

- Lead a predictable routine together, like bath, teeth, then a story.
- Move "worry time" earlier in the evening.

### For teens

- Charge your phone outside the bedroom.
- Avoid sleeping in on weekends.

1. VonDeylen O, et al. *Br J Sports Med.* 2025;59:698–705. 2. Butterfield L, et al. *JAMA Netw Open.* 2025;8(6):e2516333.

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