



SLEEP INFORMATION

Sleep is essential for growth, health, and overall development. A consistent and restful sleep routine can boost cognitive abilities, mood, and energy levels. If your child is having trouble sleeping, here are six key actions to consider:

1. Establish a Regular Bedtime Routine:

Consistency is Key: Endeavor to set a consistent bedtime and wake-up time—even on weekends. This helps regulate your child's body clock.

Routine Activities: Incorporate calming pre-bedtime activities such as reading a book, taking a warm bath, or listening to soft music. This can signal to your child that it's time to wind down.

2. Create a Sleep-Conducive Environment:

Comfort Matters: Ensure the child's bed and pillows are comfortable. Consider using blackout curtains to reduce light, especially during summer months or if street lights are bright.

Temperature: Keep the room cool but comfortable. Most people sleep better in cooler environments, but ensure it's not too cold for the child.

3. Limit Screen Time Before Bed:

Blue Light Effects: Devices like TVs, tablets, and smartphones emit blue light, which can interfere with the production of the sleep hormone melatonin. Aim to switch off these devices at least an hour before bed.

Encourage Other Activities: Instead of screens, consider board games, puzzles, or drawing as evening activities.

4. Monitor Diet and Fluid Intake:

Avoid Caffeine: Ensure your child avoids foods and drinks containing caffeine, such as chocolate, cola, and certain medications, particularly in the evening.

Limit Liquids: To prevent nighttime waking for the toilet, limit liquid intake 1-2 hours before bedtime. However, ensure your child is adequately hydrated during the day.

5. Encourage Physical Activity:

Daily Exercise: Regular physical activity can help children fall asleep faster and enjoy deeper sleep. However, try not to engage in vigorous activity close to bedtime as it can be stimulating.

Outdoor Play: Whenever possible, allow your child some time outside each day. Natural sunlight can help regulate sleep-wake cycles.

6. Managing Anxiety and Stress:

Discuss Concerns: Children might have fears or anxieties that can disrupt sleep. Take time to talk, ensuring they feel heard and reassured.

Relaxation Techniques: Consider teaching your child basic relaxation techniques such as deep breathing or visualizing a calm place.

Sometimes medication can be used to help children return to a good sleep routine.

Melatonin:

- What it does: Melatonin is a hormone that helps regulate sleep-wake cycles.
- When to use it: It's often used to help initiate sleep, taken 30-60min before bedtime
- What dose: The dosage can vary from 1mg to 6mg, depending on the child's age, weight, and specific needs.

Clonidine:

- What it does: Clonidine works on the central nervous system and is sometimes used off-label to - treat insomnia in children with ADHD and autism.
- When to use it: Typically, it's given before bedtime to help with sleep onset and maintenance.
- Side Effects: Can include low blood pressure, dry mouth, and constipation.
- Typical Doses: Dosages usually range from 50-150mcg at bedtime. Dosage may vary based on your child's age, weight, and medical condition.

Remember, every child is unique, and what works for one might not work for another. Be patient, persistent, and flexible as you find the best strategies for your family.

Kind Regards



Yours sincerely
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Note: This is general advice only and your specialist may provide alternative suggestion.

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