

ADEQUATE SLEEP CHAPTER 6-2

# 14 BEDTIME RITUALS FOR BETTER SLEEP



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— wellness —

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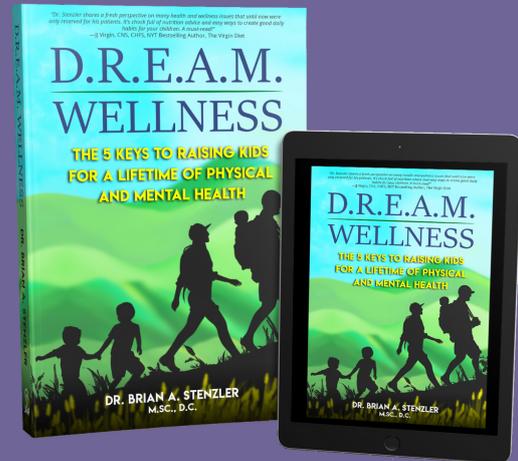
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This guide is a bonus supplement to go with Chapter 6-3 "Adequate Sleep" in the book, *DREAM Wellness: The 5 Keys to Raising Kids for a Lifetime of Physical and Mental Health*.

If you do not have a copy, you can order your Kindle or printed version now at [www.DREAMWellnessBook.com](http://www.DREAMWellnessBook.com).



More than half of American adults say they experience sleep problems on a regular basis, but you don't have to be one of them. The things you do before bed can determine whether you toss and turn or get a good night's sleep. Learn how to create bedtime rituals that will have you waking up every morning feeling refreshed and restored.



## Bedtime Rituals for Your Body

- 1 Turn down the lights.** Exposure to light causes your body to produce hormones that increase alertness, while darkness does the opposite. Turn off the TV and computer screens at least an hour before bedtime, and draw the shades.
- 2 Slow down.** Many individuals find that exercising late in the day disrupts their sleep. Devote your evenings to gentler activities, such as knitting or reading to your kids.
- 3 Have a snack or treat.** Certain foods and beverages promote sleep. Eat a light snack with protein and healthy carbohydrates, like an unsweetened whole grain cereal with almond milk. Treat yourself to a cup of chamomile tea. Avoid sugar, caffeine and alcohol close to bedtime.
- 4 Apply a fragrance.** Lavender is an age old remedy for insomnia. Keep a lavender plant on your nightstand. Sprinkle a few drops of lavender oil on a cotton ball and slip it inside your pillowcase. Vanilla has similar effects.
- 5 Give yourself a massage.** Indulge in a self massage. Use one foot to rub the other. Soak your hands in warm water. Gently rub each finger from the base to the tip. Move your thumb in circles on the palm of the opposite hand.
- 6 Warm up.** Raising your body temperature induces drowsiness. Take a hot bubble bath or slip underneath a heavy blanket.
- 7 Get into position.** Sleep positions can work for or against you. If lying on your stomach is causing back troubles, place yourself on your back as soon as you get into bed. It will gradually become automatic.
- 8 Treat aches and pains.** It's hard to relax when your body is sore. Try to do what you can to feel more body comfort before getting into bed.
- 9 Block out noise.** Intrusive noises are everywhere, from car alarms in the city to crickets in the country. Turn on a fan or listen to a white noise machine to help you block out the noise.

## Bedtime Rituals for Your Mind

- 10 Suspend daily concerns.** What if you get to bed on time, but lie awake worrying about your credit card bills or tomorrow's meeting at work? Resolve to let go of distractions so you can sleep better. Keep a notepad and pencil by your bed... if you get thoughts of genius or remember something important, jot it down so it doesn't stay on your mind all night long.
- 11 Meditate, pray or BrainTap.** Meditation and prayer may be just what you need to guide your mind towards sleep. Relax and focus on virtuous thoughts. BrainTap can retrain your brain to help you relax, fall asleep and stay asleep.
- 12 Engage in something monotonous.** For some people, boredom is the preferred solution. Before getting into bed, organize your sock drawer or read through the manual that came with your car. If you're still feeling wired, count sheep or recite multiplication tables to yourself.
- 13 Play a lullaby.** Music is so effective at putting babies to sleep that there's a whole category of songs for this purpose. Music is an approach you can still use when you get older. You might like Mozart or soft jazz.
- 14 Create a trigger.** Your mind and body is closely connected. Any object or practice can make you drowsy if you learn to associate it with sleep. Put on a pair of soft flannel pajamas when you're ready to retire for the night. Go ahead and hug your teddy bear.

