**Sleep right, sleep tight: Summary**

**Recommended dose:** The National Sleep Foundation recommends 7-9 hours for adults between the ages of 26 to 65+

**Changes:** Sleep changes significantly with aging, and these changes can have functional consequences varying significantly across and within persons. Canonical changes include:

* + **Advanced sleep timing** (i.e. earlier bed + wake times)
  + **Longer sleep-onset latency** (i.e. longer time taken to fall asleep)
  + **Shorter overall sleep duration**
  + **Increased sleep fragmentation** (i.e. less consolidated sleep with more awakenings, transitions to lighter sleep stages)
  + **“Lighter” sleep** (i.e. higher likelihood of sensitivity to external sensory stimuli)
  + **Reduced amount of deeper NREM sleep** known as “slow wave”, stages 3 & 4 sleep
  + **Increased time spent in lighter NREM stages** 1 + 2
  + **Shorter + fewer NREM- REM sleep cycles**
  + **Increased time spent awake** throughout the night
  + **Increased frequency of diurnal** (unplanned) **napping** due to excessive daytime sleepiness (“daytime sleep propensity”)

**Consequences:** Sleep dysregulation has significant downstream effects on **memory, mood,** and **metabolism**

**What you can do:**

**Environmental strategies**

1. **Optimize your sleep environment:**
   * Keep bedroom temperature between 62 and 70 degrees;
   * Keep it dark & quiet using sensory deprivation techniques (e.g. blackout curtains, eye mask, earplugs)
   * If your bed feels uncomfortable or exceed 10 years of age, replace it. You spend a third of your life asleep
2. **Optimize your sleep hygiene:**
   * Exercise early in the day to increase energy expenditure
   * Keep naps brief (15-20 minutes) and consistent, taking one at the same time daily should you opt for one
   * Frontload your water intake so you don’t have to wake up and use the bathroom
   * Avoid caffeine after 12 PM
   * Limit alcohol to 3-4 hours before bed

**Behavioral strategies**

* + Cultivate a relaxing pre-bedtime ritual one hour before bed
  + 1-2 hours before, reduce or eliminate light consumption
  + Go to bed when **sleepy** not **tired** 
    1. **Sleepy = head bobbing, eyelids closing**
    2. **Tired = state of psychological/emotional depletion; how we often feel after a long day of work**
  + Anchor your wake up time; wake up at the same time every day, even on weekends (your body doesn’t know the difference and “rewards” you when you do)
  + Get early morning light exposure
  + Move throughout the day
  + **Practice stimulus control:** Use the bed for sleep, sex, and sickness only; doing anything else in bed maintains it as a cue for **activity** instead of sleep, which maintains insomnia symptoms.
    1. **If you can’t return to bed within 15-20 minutes, first try practicing a relaxation exercise (okay to do in bed)**

**If that doesn’t work, get out of bed and:**

**1. Go into another room**

**2. Keep lights off or low & devices away**

**3. Do something relaxing, but not stimulating** (e.g. read, fold laundry, meditate, pray

**4. Return to bed when you notice symptoms of sleepiness return**

**\*Remember to mind your thoughts**– anxious, frustrating cognitions about your inability to sleep can maintain insomnia