

SLEEP LIKE YOU MEAN IT

I'M A MOM - WHAT'S SLEEP?

Between family, work, and the mental load of managing a household, sleep is often the first thing to get pushed down the priority list. It's not easy, but it's really worth the effort to improve your sleep. It affects your energy, mood, cravings, weight, workouts, immunity, and mental clarity. And if you're working hard to take care of your body, you need sleep for your efforts to pay off. Sleep is when your body repairs & rebuilds.



SLEEP HYGEINE

This refers to the daily habits & environmental factors that influence the quality & quantity of your sleep. Even if your nights are interrupted (thanks a lot babies, toddlers, partner's snoring, and pets!), you can still improve the quality of the sleep that you do get - which can make a *huge* difference in how you feel & function each day.

PRACTICAL TIPS

- **Get sunlight ASAP.** Even just 10 min helps set your body's internal clock, making it easier to fall asleep at night. If you can't get outside, open the blinds.
- **Avoid bright light at night.** Dim your lights after dinner and limit screen time before bed (at the very least use a blue light filter). If you have to get up at night, avoid turning on bright lights - red nightlights are best.
- **Limit caffeine later in the day.** I know - easier said than done. If you love the routine, try decaf or tea. A good rule of thumb is to stop at least 6 hours before bedtime.
- **Avoid large meals late.** For some people, this interferes with sleep. I like to have an early dinner and then a snack before bed - high in protein, of course!
- **Keep your room cool, dark, and quiet.** Use blackout shades or an eye mask; use a fan or a white noise machine to promote more restful sleep.
- **Create a wind-down routine.** Doing the same set of calming things each night (like stretch, read, take a short walk, or meditate) helps your brain recognize that it's time to sleep.
- **Try meditation.** Even 5 min of slow, intentional breathing can lower your heart rate & help shift your body into sleep mode. Experiment with deep breathing, box breathing, body scanning, and guided visualization.
- **Avoid alcohol close to bedtime.** It may make you feel tired, but it disrupts your sleep cycle and leads to more night wakings & poor quality sleep. Alcohol interferes with many key hormones, including melatonin and insulin.
- **Protect your bedtime.** If you're tempted to stay up late for "me time" (which we're *all* guilty of!), ask yourself if it's worth how you'll feel in the morning.