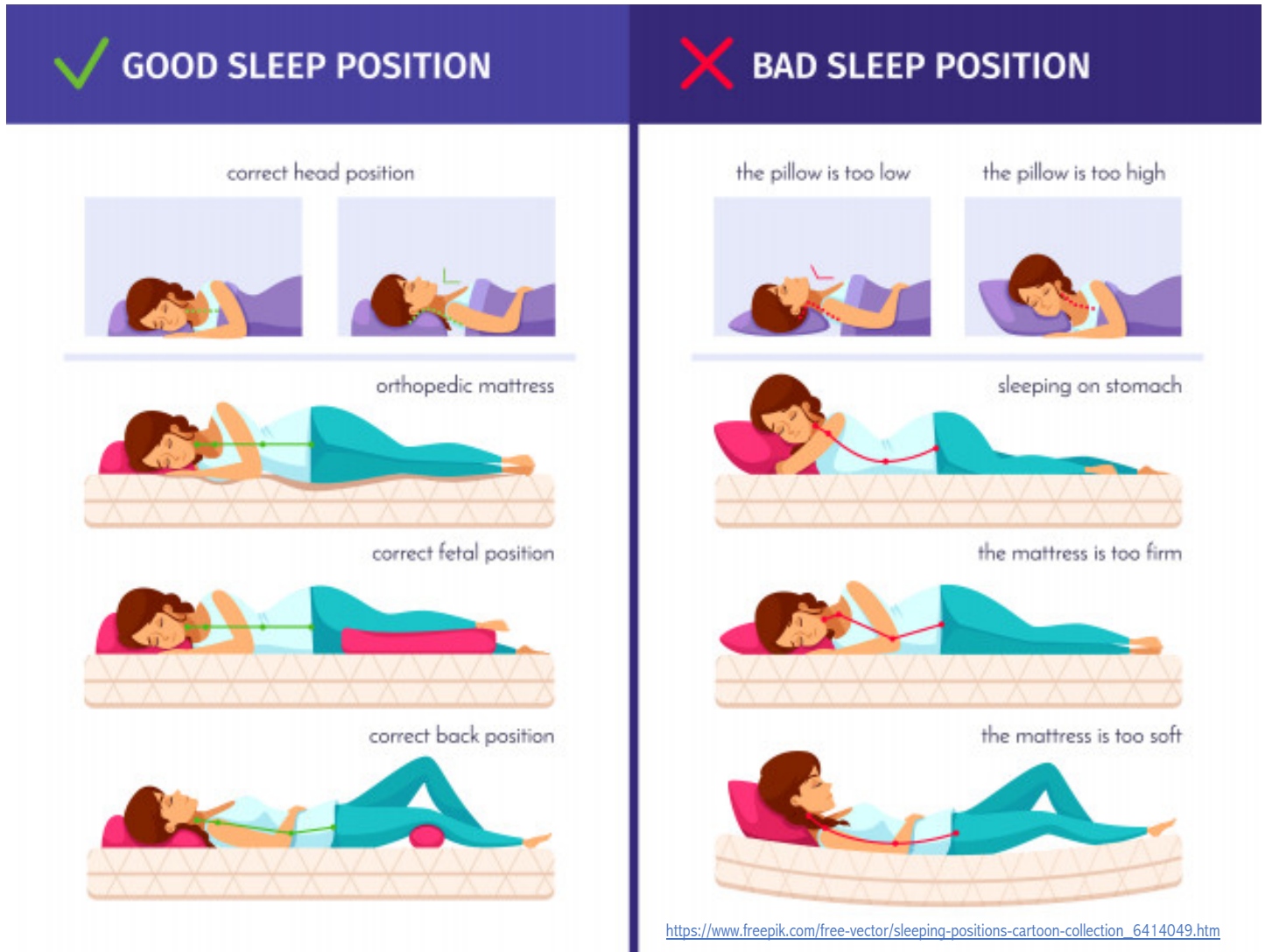
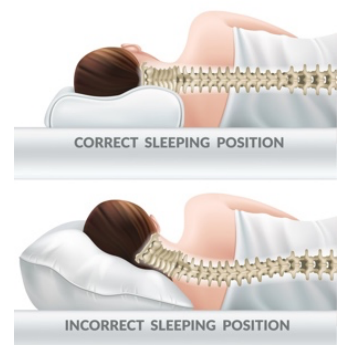


Sleep Positions and Bedding to Minimize Pain



- ❖ **No single type of mattress or pillow works for all people**, and you may need to experiment.
 - Adjustable mattresses (e.g., Sleep Number) allow people to adjust the firmness to find what works best, and may allow you to select different firmness than your bed partner.
 - A bed “topper” can help distribute your weight more, decreasing pressure on shoulders and hips. Toppers can be memory foam, feather, poly-fill, or sheepskin-type. You may do best with a combination of more than one topper. (Toppers reviewed at <https://buyersguide.org/mattress-topper/t/best>)
 - Often a firm mattress with a thick topper provides good support and weight distribution.
- ❖ **The pillow under your head should hold your neck in good alignment.** For most people, this means a thin pillow if you sleep on your back, and a thicker pillow if you sleep on your side, and no pillow under your head if you sleep on your belly.
 - Belly sleeping is stressful to the neck because you have to turn it 90° to the side. If you prefer belly sleeping, try leaning into a body pillow so you are 45° to the bed (picture top middle).



- ❖ **If you have shoulder pain when side-sleeping**, try a pillow that provides space for your arm (picture top L), or arrange your pillows to unweight your shoulder. A pillow under your waist may also reduce compression on the shoulder (bottom L).
- ❖ **If you have hip pain when side-sleeping**, try a pillow under your waist to take some weight off your hip (see picture, bottom L) or pillow between knees (picture R).
- ❖ Various pillow arrangements shown below. Maternity pillows can be useful (bottom middle).

https://www.freepik.com/free-vector/correct-incorrect-sleeping-poses_10211096.htm

MULTI-POSITION USE



Sleep Hygiene Education^{47,83,110-112}

1. Go to sleep and wake up at the same time every day. This will help set your natural biological clock. Exposure to bright natural light when you first wake up is also helpful to set your natural biological clock.
2. Use your bed for only sleep and sexual activity to help train your brain that if you are in your bed, you should be sleeping. Do not eat, work, or watch TV in bed. Do these activities outside of the bedroom. Leave bed if unable to fall asleep within 20 minutes and return when sleepy. If unable to leave the bed due to limited mobility or safety concerns, do something relaxing (ie, relaxation techniques) until sleepy and able to fall to sleep.
3. Develop a relaxing bedtime routine. This may include taking a warm bath, reading a book, meditation, or stretching. Avoid stimulating activities right before bedtime, including watching TV or discussing a stressful topic.
4. Avoid moderate to vigorous exercise at least 2-3 hours before bedtime. Exercising immediately before bedtime stimulates your body and brain, making it hard to fall asleep. There is evidence however that doing regular (preferably moderate to vigorous) exercise improves your sleep at night. Talk to your physical therapist about an appropriate exercise program.
5. Avoid caffeinated foods and drinks at least 4 hours before bedtime (includes most tea, coffee, chocolate, and soft drinks). Check the presence of caffeine in your drink or food by reading the label. Caffeine can cause difficulty falling asleep and increase the number of times you wake up during the night.
6. Refrain from drinking alcohol or smoking at least 3 to 4 hours before bedtime. Although people may think drinking alcohol causes relaxation before bedtime it can actually increase the number of times you wake up during the night and can cause you to wake up early. Nicotine in cigarettes acts as a stimulant that can cause difficulty falling asleep.
7. Do not take unprescribed or over-the-counter sleeping pills.
8. Avoid daytime napping so that you are tired at night and can fall asleep easily. If you feel you need to take a nap, limit the nap to 30 minutes and avoid napping in the evening.
9. Make your sleeping environment comfortable and relaxing. This includes avoiding too much light and disturbing noises. Stop using light emitting electronics (ie, television, computer, smartphone) at least 30 minutes before bedtime as the blue light that is emitted can disrupt sleep by suppressing melatonin production. Use ear plugs, light-blocking curtains, or an eye mask if needed. Also, keep the temperature comfortable. Being too warm or cold may disturb your sleep. Also, use a comfortable and supportive pillow and mattress.
10. Avoid eating a large meal or spicy food 2-3 hours before going to bed. Your digestive system slows down while you are sleeping, which can stimulate acid secretions that cause heartburn. A light snack may be helpful if you are hungry. Avoid excessive liquid 2-3 hours before bedtime.
11. Talk to your doctor or health professional if you still have trouble sleeping.

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Sleep Resources:

- 1) Sleep Foundations: www.sleepfoundation.org
 - a) Sleep Foundation has a “14 Nights to Better Sleep” program where they email you information about one topic a day for two weeks. <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/sleep-hygiene/14-nights-to-better-sleep>
 - b) They also have a Better Sleep Guidebook: https://www.sleepfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/28uykmq_SF_SleepRegimen_Guidebook_r2_compressed.pdf?utm_source=Klaviyo&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=sleep_regimen_1&_kx=QivM2gYFkBPDduRd7EKdnqf6kkEXjfg4M9pSGtmCCuQ%3D.TKJEB5. You can also find a link at the bottom of the “14 Nights” emails.
 - c) CBT-i (CBT for insomnia) uses CBT techniques to manage insomnia. Research shows that it is at least as effective as medication for improving sleep. And it is much safer than medication. There are many apps that provide aspects of CBT-i. Review of best sleep apps of 2023: <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/best-sleep-apps>
 - i) CBT-I Coach is a free CBT-I app, intended specifically for people with a trauma history, but helpful for anyone. Info at https://www.ptsd.va.gov/appvid/mobile/cbticoach_app_public.asp
 - d) Mouth and throat exercises to decrease snoring and sleep apnea: <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/snoring/mouth-exercises-to-stop-snoring>
- 2) Medications that can cause insomnia, from Ask the Pharmacist, Dr. Armon Neel Jr., PharmD, CGP and Bill Hogan, journalist. <https://www.aarp.org/health/drugs-supplements/info-04-2013/medications-that-can-cause-insomnia.html>
- 3) Canadian guidelines on management of insomnia (content both for patients and providers, with lots of resources): <https://tools.cep.health/tool/management-of-chronic-insomnia/#non-pharmacological-options>
- 4) Walker, M. **Why We Sleep**. Scribner, 2018. How to sleep effectively. (Note that there is a Summary version of this book that doesn’t provide all the details)
- 5) <https://mysleepwell.ca> has guidelines for sleeping better without medications.
- 6) <https://sleepcouncil.org.uk/advice-support/sleep-advice/> More sleep advice.
- 7) <https://bedadvice.co.uk> general advice about selecting a bed.