

Pillow Talk
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If there's a common bond that all Techers share, it's probably insomnia. Before your sleep gets too far out of sync this term, here are some tips for better sleep, courtesy of the Counseling Center.

- Your mom was right – you really do need between 7 1/2 and 8 hours of sleep each night. Less sleep than that can diminish your concentration and focus, which can ultimately impair your work. Instead of thinking about sleep as time better spent catching up on your work, come to think of sleep as an investment in yourself that will help you do the best work you can.
- Theoretically, it's good to try to go to bed at around the same time each night, but we all know that's just not possible most of the time. What's much more practical is to try to get up at around the same time each morning. (Yes, even on weekends...) Getting your body used to a routine can help you sleep more consistently and more restfully.
- Try not to nap during the day. If you must, try to do it in the early afternoon, and don't nap for more than 45 minutes. Napping for longer than that can interfere with falling asleep later that night.
- Don't read, study, or watch TV in bed. By using your bed only for sleeping, you condition yourself to associate your bed with a restful state instead of being mentally alert.
- Try not to eat anything a few hours before bed, and try to avoid caffeine or alcohol a few hours before bed.
- Finally, even though it seems intuitive to tire yourself out by exercising before bed, this can actually interfere with falling asleep quickly. If you do exercise, schedule it for at least 4-5 hours before getting in bed.

Lee H. Coleman is a clinical psychologist at the Counseling Center, located in the Health Center on Arden Road. If you are having trouble sleeping or want to talk with a counselor about any other concerns, call 395-8331 to set up an appointment. You can also call Jane Curtis, the health educator, at 395-2961. For more information online, visit <http://www.sleepfoundation.org>