



Blue Light and Your Sleep

What is blue light?

- Blue wavelengths of light boost attention, reaction times, and mood. This can be very beneficial during the daytime, however, blue light is the most disruptive at night. With the increase in electronic screens and energy efficient lighting, our exposure to blue wavelengths of light is increasing after sundown.

How does exposure to blue light at night affect our bodies?

- Exposure to blue light at night can interfere with our bodies' ability to produce the hormone called melatonin. Melatonin influences our circadian rhythms and the amount and quality of sleep we get at night. If we have too much exposure to blue light at night, our sleep may suffer. In fact, light at night is part of the reason so many people don't get enough sleep. This may lead to reduced brain function the next day and long-term chronic health issues over time.

What can you do to improve your sleep and reduce the impact of blue light at night?

- Expose yourself to lots of bright light during the day to boost your mood and alertness during the day, and increase your ability to sleep at night.
- Establish a bed time routine that includes relaxing activities (reading, meditation, yoga, etc.) that can help put you in a sleepy mood.
- Dim the brightness of your electronic devices starting at sunset. If you are an iPhone user, the recent iOS 9.3 update has a mode called Night Shift that you can set starting for whatever time you choose in the evening. When Night Shift kicks in, your phone automatically adjusts the display so that it gives off warmer, less blue light. If you are an Android user, you may want to try an app called Twilight which has similar features. If you are looking for an option for your computer, Iris and f.lux are two software options to consider.

(See Reverse Side)

What can you do to improve your sleep and reduce the impact of blue light at night (continued)?

- Instructions to use Night Shift on your device:
 1. Select Settings.
 2. Select Display and Brightness.
 3. Select Night Shift.
 4. Turn on Scheduled. Here you can set the schedule from what time to what time you want the Night Shift mode to automatically turn on and off on your device.
 5. You can also adjust the Color Temperature from Less Warm to More Warm.
- Use a pair of blue-light-blocking glasses in the evening if you are working on the computer or looking at other electronic devices. Research has shown when you use these, the light doesn't suppress your melatonin and can improve sleep. Here are two options we came across in our research that are under \$30 (both are available on Amazon): Uvex Skyper Blue Light Blocking Computer Glasses with SCT-Orange Lens (S1933X) or Duco 223 Pro Amber Glasses.
- Create a digital curfew for yourself. Limit and avoid looking at bright screens beginning one to three hours before bed.

Your health and well-being will benefit if you can sleep well and create consistent night time rituals. Please let us know if you have any questions about this information.