SLEEP HYGIENE

**TASK:** Define sleep hygiene and show ways to improve quality of sleep.

**CONDITIONS:** Discussion - Question Based.

**STANDARDS:** Soldiers will understand sleep hygiene and identify technique to improve their quality of sleep.
SLEEP HYGIENE

Discuss what Sleep Hygiene is.
(DISCUSSION) Ask the Soldiers what sleep hygiene is and why it is important.

- Sleep Hygiene: Habits, environmental factors, and practices that may influence the length and quality of one's sleep.

- We cannot rush through a day, making choices that ruin our sleep, and expect to fall into a “peaceful slumber” right away.

- Sleep should be a quiet, relaxing activity, so it is important to make a mental transition from our busy day into a sleep process.

- Quiet sleep rituals help ease this transition, preparing us mentally and physically for sleep.
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Sleep In Bed Only.

(DISCUSSION) Ask the Soldiers where the best place to sleep is and activities you shouldn’t do in bed.

- It’s important not to associate the bed with anything other than sleep, otherwise it will become more difficult to fall asleep and stay asleep.

- Therefore it is recommended not to:
  - Watch Television
  - Eat in Bed
  - Discuss Finances
  - Discuss Emotional Issues
  - General Arguing
SLEEP HYGIENE

Avoid Stimulants & Depressants
(DISCUSSION) Ask the Soldiers what they should avoid and why.

- Stimulants keep us awake, depressants help us fall asleep, but not keep us asleep.

  - Smoking: Nicotine is a stimulant. Although it might feel like relaxing, it adds a stimulant into the bloodstream and keeps us up throughout the night. Avoid smoking before bed and during night awakenings.

  - Caffeine: Caffeine is also a stimulant and should stop being consumed 6 hours before sleeping. When consuming caffeine we may experience “withdraw headaches,” which in turn also keeps us up through the night.

  - Drinking: Although alcohol is a depressant and help us fall asleep, the metabolic process involved in getting the body rid of the alcohol causes “withdraw syndrome.” Withdraw causes awakenings and is a common cause of “sweats” and nightmares.
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Create a Sleep Routine & Stick To It.

- A peaceful bedtime routine lets the brain know that it’s time unwind and forget the day’s stresses.

- Fall asleep at the same time every night - Helps train your body to naturally start “shutting down” at the same time, which aids in falling asleep faster.

- Keep the noise down - Our day is filled with noise, it shouldn’t follow us to bed. Turn off the television, radio, and videogames. If you can’t eliminate other loud noises, “mask” them with white-noise, for example a fan, setting a radio between stations, or buy special a white-noise machine.