

SLEEP GUIDELINES



DO:

- Maintain a regular schedule-go to bed and get up at the same time every day
- Allow sleep by lightly focusing on something non stimulating-this varies by person; reading, TV, music, focus on breathing, etc.
- Sleep in a cool, dark, quiet, room
- Get 30 minutes bright light preferably in am
- Exercise 30 minutes per day in am or early afternoon
- Use bed only for sleep and sex
- If chronic insomnia:
 - Restrict time in bed to number of hours actually spent sleeping
 - When sleep has been 85% of time:
 - Increase time in bed by 15 min. per night
 - When sleeping has been <85%:
 - Decrease time in bed by 15 min.
 - Only increase/decrease time once a week and not below a total of five hours in bed
- Allow time for “winding down” at day’s end
- Relax mind and body
 - Light carbohydrate snack
 - Yogurt, milk, ice cream
 - Hot bath or shower
- Have a sleeping pill available (Sonata, Lunesta, Ambien), at the bedside if needed
- Reverse conditioned arousal:
 - Reassociate the bedroom with rapid sleep onset
 - Go to bed only when sleepy
 - If 15 min. elapse and not sleeping, get up and go to another room

DON'T:

- Try to “do sleep”, or try too hard to fall asleep
- Turn off the light when not sleepy
- Watch the clock, or think about how much sleep you’ve gotten
- Have intense or heated discussions at bedtime
- Lie in bed for hours not sleeping
- Use caffeine or nicotine-2 hrs. prior
- Eat a large meal-3 hrs. prior
- Catastrophize about consequences of not getting enough sleep
- Be an “insomnia phobic” i.e., obsess about “what if?” I can’t sleep
- Tell child, or yourself “go to sleep”.
 - You can’t “make it happen”
- Use alcohol to 2-3 hours before bedtime
 - Decreases REM
 - Causes rebound awakening during the night
- Eat, work, watch TV, read, talk on the phone in bed
- Nap during the day
- Dwell on negative or stressful thoughts, fantasies, memories
 - If they occur, *shift mental focus* to relaxing stimulus that works best for you: visual and/or auditory and/or kinesthetic and/or tactile distractions
- Exercise-3 hours prior to bedtime
- Work into late evening