

Sleep Hygiene

Patient handout compiled from Geriatrics at Your Fingertips 2014

Improve your sleep hygiene with these steps:

During the Day:

- Get out of bed at the same time each morning, no matter how much sleep you got the night before.
- Exercise daily, but not within 2 hours of bedtime.
- Get exposure to lots of bright light during the day.
- Limit or avoid naps, unless necessary part of sleeping schedule.
- Limit or avoid alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine, especially before bedtime.

At Bedtime:

- If hungry, have a light snack before bed (unless there are symptoms of GERD or other conditions). Avoid heavy meals at bedtime.
- Don't use bedtime as worry time. Write down worries for next day and clear your mind.
- Only sleep in your bedroom.
- Make your bedroom comfortable, quiet, dark, and with a steady temperature.
- Wear comfortable clothes to bed.
- Use soothing noise like a fan or a "white noise" machine.
- Remove or cover the clock.
- Avoid watching TV in your bedroom.
- Try to go to sleep at the same time every night, but don't go to bed unless sleepy.
- Develop a sleep ritual. Try a hot bath, preparing for bed, and then relaxing, meditating, or reading.
- If you can't fall asleep after 15-20 minutes do a soothing activity such as listening to soft music or reading. Avoid bright light or computer screens.