

Healthy Sleep Hygiene

- **Go to bed at about the same time each night.** Avoid going to bed earlier than usual. If you are not yet sleepy, wait a little while until you feel you are sleepy and then go to bed. Limiting your time in bed helps to consolidate and deepen your sleep. Spending too long in bed can lead to fragmented and shallow sleep. Most adults need about 8 hours of sleep a night.
- **Get up at the same time every day, seven days a week.** A regular wake time will help you fall asleep more easily at night, and helps set your "internal clock".
- **Cover the clock or put it where you cannot see it.**
- **Sleep only in bed.** Sleeping in other locations at home may make it more difficult to sleep in bed.
- **Use the bedroom only for sleeping and sexual activity.** Avoid any other activities (such as reading, watching TV, or using the phone) in bed. This will help you sleep in bed and stay awake when you are not in bed.
- **Do not lie awake thinking in bed.** It is often helpful to spend time earlier in the evening to work on your problems or plan the next day's activities.
- **If you cannot fall asleep for 15 or 20 minutes, get out of bed and go to another room to do a quiet activity, such as reading or doing a puzzle.** When you feel sleepy, go back to bed. Avoid television, computer use, snacks, or tobacco use, as these can make you more alert. Get up at your regular time in the morning, no matter how much you slept.
- **Avoid naps.** If you have an irresistible urge to sleep during the day, a single nap of 30 minutes or less may be taken in bed. Longer or more numerous naps can disturb sleep the following night.
- **Avoid caffeine, especially in the afternoon or evening.**
- **Avoid alcohol, especially in the evening.** Although alcohol may help some people fall asleep, the sleep through the night becomes fragmented.
- **Regular daily exercise helps to deepen sleep.** Exercise too close to bedtime may disturb sleep. Finish exercising at least 3 hours before bedtime.
- **Keep your bedroom quiet.** Carpeting, wearing earplugs, and closing the door may help.
- **Keep the room temperature moderate.** Excessively warm rooms may disturb sleep.
- **Don't go to bed hungry.** A light snack at bedtime may help sleep.
- **Avoid excessive fluid intake in the evening** to minimize the need for nighttime trips to the bathroom.
- **Avoid using tobacco in any form, especially at bedtime or if you awaken at night.** Tobacco use disturbs sleep.

This information is compliments of the sleep experts at the Illinois Neurological Institute Sleep Center in Peoria. For more information, to refer a patient or make an appointment, call (309) 624-9960.



This information has been reprinted with permission from Sarah Nath Zallek, M.D., Medical Director, INI Sleep Center.