

HEALTH ANALYSIS

Promoting Good Sleep Habits and Hygiene with Conservative Measures

Maintain a Regular Sleep Routine

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. Ideally, your schedule will remain the same (+/- 20 minutes) every night of the week. Try to include weekends.

Avoid Naps if Possible

- Naps decrease the 'Sleep Debt' that is necessary for you to feel tired at normal bed times.
- Each of us needs a certain amount of sleep per 24-hour period. We need that amount, and we don't need more than that. In humans, the magic number is 7.5-8.0 hours. Giraffes are 1.9 hours.

Do Not Lie in Bed Awake for More than 20 minutes

- If you find your mind racing, or worrying about not being able to sleep, get out of bed. Go sit in a chair in the dark and do something boring. Think about whatever comes to mind but DO NOT SLEEP IN THE CHAIR and when you begin to feel drowsy, return to bed. NO TV OR INTERNET DURING THESE PERIODS!
- It's OK if this happens numerous times a night but try to maintain your regular wake time and avoiding naps.

Do Not Watch TV, Use a Laptop or Read in Bed

- You will associate these activities with wakefulness and the 60 hertz flicker fosters insomnia (even when eyes are closed).

Drink Caffeine Moderately and Avoid Sleep-Interfering Substances like Alcohol and Tobacco

- Caffeine effects can last up to 5 hours after ingestion. Caffeine makes initiating sleep more difficult and can even fragment sleep cycles. If you drink caffeine, i.e. sodas, teas, other beverages, do so before 1300.
- Cigarettes, alcohol and over-the-counter medications, including sleep aides, may also cause fragmented sleep.

Exercise Regularly

- Exercise promotes continuous sleep so try to elevate your heart rate before 2 pm every day or every other day.
- Avoid rigorous exercise before bedtime. Rigorous exercise increases body heat and the brain likes a cool temperature during sleep to heal. The ideal ambient bedroom temperature is 72 degrees or below.

Have a Quiet, Comfortable Bedroom

- A comfortable mattress contributes to less pain, better work performance and improved overall health. An aging mattress is just as bad as an uncomfortable one. You should replace your mattress every 5-7 years.
- Turn off extraneous noise that may disrupt sleep. Background 'white noise' like a fan or the sound of rain is OK.
- If your pets wake you during the night, keep them outside of the bedroom.
- Your bedroom should be as dark as possible.
- And if you are a 'clock watcher', remove it from your sight.

Other Helpful Tips

- Consider an OTC* sleep wedge pillow
- Consider Flonase for nasal congestion – treat allergic rhinitis
- Consider OTC* extra strength nasal strips
- Smoking Cessation

OTC* = over the counter

Patient will need to purchase item. Item is not a Tricare benefit

