

# How to Improve your Sleep Quality

- Reduce light, noise and extremes of temperature in the bedroom.
- Avoid caffeine, nicotine and alcohol before bedtime.
- Avoid a heavy meal within 2 hours of bed-time, however a light snack may help if you are hungry.
- Regular exercise late in the afternoon or early evening may deepen sleep, but do not exercise vigorously within 3 hours of going to bed.
- In order to achieve relaxation at bedtime, allow about 1 hour of quiet activity prior to going to bed, such as reading, watching television, listening to music
- Develop a bedtime ritual, such as reading or listening to relaxing music, cleaning your teeth etc, so that your body knows you are getting ready to go to sleep
- Do not go to bed too early. That is, do not go to bed unless you are feeling sleepy. If you try to go to sleep too early, before feeling sleepy, you will have difficulty getting to sleep. This may make you feel irritated and frustrated about not falling asleep and anxious about how you will cope the next day.
- Do not stay in bed if you are awake. If you go to bed when you are feeling tired and sleepy but do not fall asleep within about 15 to 20 minutes (estimated time only- **do not** use a clock), get out of bed, go to another room and do something mundane until you feel sleepy again. Repeat this procedure until you fall asleep quickly.
- Do not have a clock in your bedroom.
- Get up at the same time every morning, this will help train your “body clock”. Do **NOT** sleep in on the weekends or after a late night.
- Do not nap during the day as this will reduce your sleepiness.
- Do not worry if you cannot get to sleep at night because worry and anxiety will only delay sleep even more. The harder you try, the worse it will be. What’s the worst that can happen? If you get very little sleep one night you **WILL** still function the next day, although you may be a little more irritable and tired than usual.

