

Sleep

Tips for a Good Night's Rest

Sleep disorders may occur in people with cancer caused by treatment, physical illness, pain, hospitalization and emotional stress. In fact, 80% of patients with cancer complain of poor sleep, and are less likely to tolerate cancer therapies. Try these tips to help you get a good night's sleep.

During the Day

- Exercise regularly. A 20-minute walk during the day can help you relax. **Do not** exercise in the evening before bedtime.
- Limit naps if you can. If you must rest, limit your nap to 30 minutes or less.

Before Bedtime

- Avoid alcohol, caffeine, chocolate and nicotine in the late afternoon and evening. Limit liquids in the evening before going to bed.
- Turn off electronic screens such as a TV, computer, phone or tablet at least 1 hour before bedtime. Listen to quiet music or take a warm bath to relax before bed.
- If you are worried, anxious or thoughts keep you awake, try writing them down. Make a list of things to do so you will not worry about forgetting anything. This may help you relax.

At Bedtime

- Go to bed and get up at the same time every day. Keep this routine even on weekends.
- A light bedtime snack of warm milk, turkey or a banana may make you sleepy. Use your bedroom for sleep and intimacy only. **Do not** read, watch TV or work in the bedroom.
- If you tend to watch the clock at night, turn the clock around.
- If you have a partner, both people should go to bed at the same time, if possible.

Problems Falling Asleep or Waking During the Night

- If you have not fallen asleep in 15 minutes, go to another room to relax.
- Listen to quiet music.
- Avoid things that provide mental stimulation such as watching TV or reading exciting books.
- Go back to bed when you feel sleepy. If you still cannot fall asleep, get up again and repeat these steps as necessary.

Improving Sleep During Your Hospital Stay

- Try the same strategies for sleep as if you are at home.

- Bring familiar items from home to make yourself more comfortable.
- Try using an eye mask to avoid light and earplugs to block out noise during sleep.
- Maintain a daily routine and do physical activity to promote a better night's sleep.
- Take a 20 to 30 minute nap if needed during the day to improve alertness and increase mood.
- Try not to lie in bed all day. Get up and do activities throughout the day.

Tips for a Good Night's Rest During Your Hospital Stay Video



Apps for Sleep

There are many types of apps available to help with sleep and relaxation. Do a search on your smart phone or tablet for new ideas to help improve your sleep quality.