

# INSOMNIA – TIPS FOR BETTER SLEEP

Better sleep begins with a sleep preparation plan

## Preparing for sleep



**Create a sleep-inducing bedroom.** Keep your bedroom dark, quiet and comfortable during sleep, not too warm or cold. Maximize comfort, minimize distractions.

## Falling asleep



**Calm your mind.** Don't focus on trying to fall asleep, instead focus on trying to relax. If you are still awake after 20 minutes, get up and do something calming until you feel sleepy.

## During the day



**Avoid daytime naps.** Don't take naps after 3pm and don't nap longer than 20 minutes. Overcome the afternoon energy slump – get up from your desk, take a short walk or get a glass of ice water.



**Keep it cool.** Cool bodies sleep better, a bedroom that's too warm at night can interfere with sleep. Keeping the temperature between 60 and 67 increases the time spent in REM sleep.



**Power Down.** The soft blue glow from a cell phone, tablet, or digital clock on your bedside table may hurt your sleep. Turn off TVs, computers, and other light-emitting sources an hour before you go to bed.



**Work out early.** Regular exercise helps you sleep better, but avoid a nighttime burst of energy. Do not work out within 2-3 hours of bedtime.



**Craft a consistent pre-bed routine.** Turn off the noise of the day. Give yourself extra time before bed to wind down and get ready to sleep. Put aside any work, or complicated decisions 2 to 3 hours before bed.



**Rethink Your Drink.** Alcohol depresses the nervous system, so a nightcap may help some people fall asleep, but beware. After its initial effects wear off, it will make you wake up more often overnight. Warm milk and decaf tea are better choices.



**Pay attention to what you eat and drink.** Avoid caffeine and alcohol for at least 6 to 8 hours before bedtime – longer if it affects your sleep. Finish eating at least an hour before bed.



**Stay on a sleep schedule.** Set your body clock. Go to sleep at the same time each night, and get up at the same time each morning, even on the weekends. A set sleep routine will train you to fall asleep and wake up more easily.



**Use Caution with Sleeping Pills.** Some sleep medicines can become habit-forming, and they may have side effects. Ideally, pills should be a short-term solution while you make lifestyle changes for better sleep.