

# SLEEP

## Promoting Tips for a Better Sleep

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1. Select a standard wake up time and a standard bed time. Use this daily whether or not you have a restful or poor sleep. A standard sleep schedule is important to re-setting your circadian rhythm every day.
2. Make sure that the standard bed time that you select reflects a time when you're sleepy, meaning that this is routinely the time of night that you 'can't keep your eyes open'. Sleep consolidation is important. We want to pair the bed with sleep vs. wakeful activities like reading, watching tv and 'thinking'.
3. Get out of bed when you can't sleep. If you're unable to sleep within thirty minutes of getting into bed, get out of bed and go into another room. Sit in a comfortable chair and do a word search (pen and paper vs. computer). When you feel sleepy, return to bed. Repeat if needed.
4. Create a buffer zone. An hour prior to your chosen, standard bed time create some quiet time and decompress from the day's events using activities to calm and soothe the nervous system such as a bath, mindfulness, a puzzle. Avoid the news, television, social media, computers.
5. Use the bed for sleeping and intimacy only. If you're worrying or planning and you can't turn off your mind, stay out of bed as "thinking" will interfere with sleep. Sit in a chair and make a list of what you need to do or what you're worrying about and promise yourself that you'll take a look at the list in the morning.
6. Use relaxation strategies to calm and soothe the nervous system. Breathing strategies, guided visualization, word searches, can be helpful in unwinding from the day and preparing for sleep.
7. Unless ill avoid day time napping. Sleep needs to be earned throughout the day with regular physical and mental activity.
8. Limit caffeine and alcohol.
9. Exercise regularly and avoid intense exercise at least two hours before bed.
10. Try a light bedtime snack such as milk or cheese and crackers.
11. Ensure that you love the space you sleep in! Do you like the room that you sleep in? Is the mattress comfortable? How about the pillows? Do you like the curtains? Is the room quiet? Is it too hot? Is the dog or cat taking up too much space on the bed?

We all struggle with sleep at times. Reach out for help and support if sleep issues persist and interfere with your overall well-being.

NFHT offers CBT-Insomnia workshops throughout the year that can help improve your sleep.