

Sleep Hygiene



What is insomnia? — Insomnia is a problem with sleep. People with insomnia have trouble falling or staying asleep, or they do not feel rested when they wake up. Insomnia can be a side effect of different medications, such as steroids, that you may be taking.

Symptoms:

- Having trouble falling or staying asleep
- Feeling tired or sleepy during the day
- Forgetting things or having trouble thinking clearly
- Getting cranky, anxious, irritable, or depressed
- Having less energy or interest in doing things
- Making mistakes or getting into accidents more often than normal
- Worrying about lack of sleep

Tips to help you sleep better:

- Sleep only long enough to feel rested and then get out of bed
- Go to bed and get up at the same time every day, even on weekends
- Do not try to force yourself to sleep. If you can't sleep, get out of bed and try again later.
- Have coffee, tea, and other foods that have caffeine only in the morning
- Avoid alcohol in the late afternoon, evening, and bedtime
- Avoid smoking, especially in the evening
- Avoid large meals or drinking too much fluid before bedtime.
- Keep your bedroom dark, cool, quiet, and free of reminders of work or other things that cause you stress. Do not watch TV or use other electronic devices in bed.
- Solve problems or tie up loose ends before you go to bed to decrease worrying.
- Plan a relaxing activity before bed, like looking at a magazine, taking a warm shower or listening to soft music.
- Exercise several days a week, but early in the day, not right before bed
- Do not use alcohol to get to sleep, as it will disturb your sleep later in the night.
- Do not use sleeping medications until you have tried these tips as well as talked to your doctor. Over the counter sleep medications can be habit forming and have unwanted side effects.