



enhanced patient care  
enhanced patient lives

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## INSOMNIA (DIFFICULTY WITH SLEEP) MANAGEMENT

**INSOMNIA:** The experience of not being able to fall asleep and stay asleep.  
Sleep can be affected by illness, anxiety, pain, treatment, medications, and stress.  
Insomnia can cause you to feel tired or irritable, or can cause depression.

**SLEEP** is important:

Please report sleeping problems. The goal is uninterrupted sleep through the night.  
Report snoring or choking during sleep, or other symptoms that interfere with sleep (pain, heartburn, reflux).

**RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE SLEEP:**

Treat physical symptoms: see handouts on anorexia, fatigue, nausea, diarrhea, constipation, pain, etc.  
Keep regular sleep and waking times. Develop a routine at bedtime. Avoid excess daytime napping.  
Use the bedroom only for sleep at night, not for activities such as watching TV or napping or working.  
Eat a high protein snack 2 hours before bedtime. Avoid alcohol or heavy, spicy, sugary foods before bed.  
Avoid drinks with caffeine (coffee, tea, soda). Avoid drinking fluids before bedtime.  
Encourage regular bowel and bladder habits. Empty the bowel and bladder before you go to bed.  
Get comfortable: Arrange soft bedcovers, pillows, and room temperature for comfort; wear soft loose clothes.  
Get quiet: Turn out lights; turn off television and radios; eliminate noise.  
Hide the clock. Turn the clock away from your view.  
Take short walk or do light exercise early in the daytime. Avoid strenuous exercise at night.

**RELAX TO PROMOTE SLEEP:**

Do activities to help relax and decrease anxiety: journaling, music, art, yoga, prayer, meditation.  
Discuss your fears and worries and concerns with your health care team.

**PROMOTE RELAXATION: TRY DEEP BREATHING and RELAXATION EXERCISE: (10 to 30 minutes).**

Use the power of imagination to learn to relax, and have some control over your responses.  
You can choose what you want to imagine and help yourself heal!  
Close your eyes. Breathe slow and deep. Focus on slowly relaxing each part of your body.  
Think of a comforting image, such as a sunset, or a peaceful beach, or a starry night sky.  
You might choose to focus on 1 or 2 words from a prayer.  
Focus and spend time with your image, feeling comfortable and relaxed. Then,  
Take a deep breath... exhale slowly... and open your eyes. You can feel relaxed, comfortable.  
Anytime you choose to do so, you can relax and return to this state of wellness.

**MEDICATION ADJUSTMENTS:**

If you have difficulty falling asleep, medication may be prescribed for you.  
If you have difficulty staying asleep, (for example, awakening at 2 AM then unable to promptly fall asleep), medication may be prescribed for you.  
Adjustments in pain medications, steroids, diuretics, stimulants, or other medications may be necessary.

**WHEN TO CALL:**

Please call if you are concerned - on any day -at any time- about any issue!  
Please call EARLY if you are not well, so that office visit may be scheduled if needed.  
If you are unable to sleep.