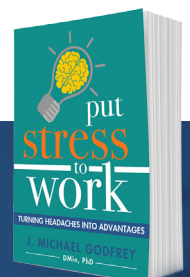


Getting a Great Night's Sleep

1. Take care with substances
 - a. No caffeine after 2 p.m.
 - b. No tobacco. Nicotine is a stimulant.
 - c. No alcohol within 3 hours of bedtime.
 - d. Check with your physician to determine if any medications you are currently taking may be interfering with your sleep.
 - e. Snack on milk products when approaching bedtime (cheese, milk, etc). They contain tryptophan a naturally occurring amino acid which is calming.
2. Take Care with Activity
 - a. Avoid exercising, strenuous, or stimulating activity within 4 hours before going to bed.
 - b. Avoid television and computer screens prior to bed. The light stimulates your brain to wake up.
3. Keep a Schedule
 - a. Go to bed at the same time and get up at the same time, even on weekends or day's off.
 - b. Give yourself time to transition into rest
 - i. Get things ready for the coming day
 - ii. Take care of personal hygiene practices
 - iii. Relax with light reading in bed or listen to an audiobook
4. Clear Your Head
 - a. Process your thoughts and worries. Write them out and give yourself permission to deal with them later.
 - b. Relax your mind so you can fall asleep
 - i. Focus on your breathing versus your thoughts. Breathe in deeply for 3-4 seconds then out 3-4 seconds.
 - ii. Focus on repeating a mantra or prayer.
 - iii. Listen for and focus on the beating of your heart
 - c. Go back to sleep -- When you wake in the night and don't quickly go back to sleep, use the practices in the above item that work for you. Don't get out of bed unless lying in bed creates stress for you or to attend to other needs. Then, get up in dim light and practice the items above to help you fall back to sleep.
5. Environment
 - a. Lighting
 - i. Dim the lighting in your living space in the evening.
 - ii. For sleeping, keep your bedroom as dark as possible. Light from phones, alarm clocks, etc. can disturb sleep.
 - b. Keep your sleeping area cool (65-75°F)

Copyright © 2017 by J. Michael Godfrey. All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the copyright holder.



- c. Use scents in your bedroom which encourage sleep (lavender, chamomile, others)
 - d. Deal with noise
 - i. Use earplugs if you are sensitive to noise.
 - ii. Use sound machines to drown problematic noises.
 - e. Be sure you have a good mattress.
 - f. Use a good quality pillow which allows our spine to lie in a straight line.
 - g. If your pet sleeps with you, consider finding another place for them to sleep, especially if they are restless and tend to move around in the night.
6. Do some Research -- Keep a sleep diary which notes time you went to bed, about how long it takes you to go to sleep, if you woke in the night and how many times, time you woke for the day, how you feel after you awake, exercise and eating. This can help you identify factors affecting your sleep for good or ill.

Perils of Poor Sleep

- Pasty and ashen skin
- Circles under the eyes
- Poor brain activity leading to poor decision
- Muscle aches
- Irritability and anxiety
- Poor concentration
- Increased risk of illness
- Increased weight gain
- Heart disease
- Mood swings
- Depression
- Weakened immune system.

Copyright © 2017 by J. Michael Godfrey. All rights reserved. No part of this document may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the copyright holder.

