HOW TO GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP

The following are suggestions to help you improve both the quality and quantity of your sleep.

Go to bed and get up at regular times. As much as possible, keep to the same schedule of going to bed and getting up. On weekends, try not to get off your schedule by more than a couple of hours.

Don’t use your bed for anything except sleep (such as reading, watching TV, or eating).

If you’re not able to fall asleep within 15 or 20 minutes, get up out of bed. Do something relaxing (light reading, listening to music, etc.) until you feel sleepy, then get back into bed.

Avoid going to bed hungry. Try a small snack about an hour before bedtime.

Avoid heavy use of alcohol. Alcohol may make it easier to fall asleep initially, but it interferes with the quality of sleep during the night.

Reduce caffeine consumption as much as possible. If you must have coffee, have it only in the morning and not late in the day.

Try some exercise during the day, preferably late in the afternoon before dinner. Even half an hour of brisk walking will help.

Develop a sleep ritual before bedtime. This is some relaxing activity you do every night in the same order at about the same time before you get into bed.

If thoughts or worries keep you from falling asleep, try writing them down before you get into bed.

Avoid napping during the day, if you can. If you feel you must nap, limit your nap to no more than 30 minutes, and no later than the afternoon.

If you can't sleep, don't get too upset; don't fight, resist, or fear sleeplessness. This will make it harder to fall asleep. Think of falling asleep as something you allow yourself to do, not make yourself do.