



Insomnia

How to get a good nights sleep

If you've had trouble getting to sleep or staying asleep for a month or more you may have insomnia. Insomnia is a sleep disorder that can include difficulty falling or staying asleep, waking too early, and feeling tired after waking. Insomnia can often be cured by practicing healthy sleep habits.

Causes of insomnia

- Depression, pain, illness or stress
- Poor bedtime or sleep habits
- Poor dietary habits
- Too much caffeine or other stimulants
- Disease conditions and/or medications used to treat the condition
- Life changes such as job loss, death, divorce, moving

Recommended Sleep*

Infants	(0 – 2 months)	12 – 18 hours
	(3 – 11 months)	14 – 15 hours
Toddlers/Children	(1 – 3 years)	12 – 14 hours
	(3 – 5 years)	11 – 13 hours
	(5 – 12 years)	10 – 11 hours
Adolescents	(13 – 20 years)	8 ½ – 9 ¼ hours
Adults	(21+ years)	7 – 9 hours

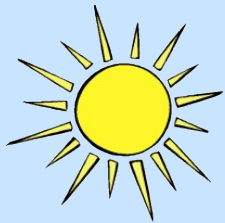
*Taken from the National Sleep Foundation Web site found at www.sleepfoundation.org/article/how-sleep-works/how-much-sleep-do-we-really-need.

Medication

Sleeping pills are only a **temporary** cure for insomnia and may be unsafe to use for a long period of time. If your health care provider prescribes sleeping pills for you it is important to take them only as directed.

Healthy Sleep Habits

During the Day



- Expose yourself to bright light right after you wake up.
- Avoid or limit your use of caffeine (coffee, tea, soda, chocolate), decongestants, alcohol, and tobacco.
- Exercise more often, but don't exercise within a few hours before going to bed.
- Learn to reduce or manage the stress in your life.
- Set aside a time in your day just for dealing with disturbing or upsetting thoughts. For example, spend 30 minutes after dinner writing down what's worrying you and what you can do about it.
- Don't nap during the day if naps seem to make your insomnia worse.



At Night



- Avoid large meals and bright lights before bedtime.
- Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, including weekends.
- Come up with a bedtime routine, and do the same thing every night before going to sleep.
- Use the bedroom for sleeping and not for watching TV or using a computer.
- Do something relaxing right before bed like reading a book or taking a bath. Do not eat, talk on the phone, use your computer or watch TV while you are in bed, or right before bed.
- Make sure your bedroom is quiet and very, very dark. The dark signals your brain to go to sleep.
- If noise is a problem, use a fan to mask the noise or use ear plugs.
- If you're still awake after trying to fall asleep for 30 minutes, get up and go to another room. Sit quietly for about 20 minutes and then try going back to bed.