



Sleep Quiz

1. Does it usually take you longer than 30 minutes to fall asleep? _____
2. Do you wake up more than twice a night? _____
3. Do you regularly drink coffee, tea, caffeinated pop or alcoholic drinks? _____
4. Do you feel that you are currently under significant stress? _____
5. Do you feel that stress and/or anxiety are contributing factors to your sleeping difficulties? _____
6. Do you feel that you are sensitive to noises and/or that noises wake you up?

7. Do you have sources of light in your bedroom? _____
8. Do you sleep in the same bed or room as someone who snores or keeps you from sleeping for any reason? _____
9. Do you feel that the air in the bedroom is too hot, cold or unclean? _____
10. Do you feel that your mattress or pillow is uncomfortable or more than 5 – 10 years old? _____
11. Do you sleep on your stomach? _____
12. Do you have “creepy, crawling or tingling” feelings in your legs? _____
13. Do you think you snore loudly, gasp or stop breathing during sleep? _____

The 6 Drugless Steps to a Better Night Sleep

Step #1: Avoid Potential Stimulants

- Avoid all caffeine containing drinks or foods (i.e. chocolate) for at least 6 hours before going to bed
- Avoid all alcohol for at least 4 hours before going to bed
- Avoid all decongestant cold medicines at night
- Avoid large meals or spicy foods for at least 3 hours before bedtime
- Avoid nicotine completely, or at least before going to bed

Step #2: Avoid Potential Night time Tension & Anxiety

- Avoid reading or watching the news before going to bed
- Avoid paying bills, checking financial reports etc. before going to bed
- Avoid arguments before going to bed

Step #3: Plan Your Sleep

- Try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day in order to train your biological clock



- If you do not fall asleep within 30 minutes, get up and do something quiet and non-stimulating. When tired, try going back to bed again
- Do not “force yourself” to fall asleep, the anxiety is counter-productive!
- Avoid afternoon naps

Step #4: Take away Potential Distractions

- Try using earplugs and eyeshades to block out all noise and light
- Move the alarm clock away from the bed (It can be a distraction)
- Do not watch TV, read or write in bed. Let your mind and body identify bed with sleeping (Okay, only one other activity in bed is allowed!)

Step #5: Get Yourself Physically Tired....Not just Mentally Tired

- Regular exercise (aerobic, walking, weight training, cycling, Yoga, Tai Chi, swimming...in fact anything) any time in the day may help deepen sleep. Suggested amount of exercise is at least 45 minutes 3 – 5 times per week

Step #6: Relax and Breathe

- Listen to a relaxation CD that teaches progressive physical and mental relaxation along with deep focused diaphragmatic breathing.

Sleeping Postures

Whatever position you sleep in, the important goal is to keep the body in the midline position and maintain a neutral spine. Sleeping on your stomach is not advised due to the increase strain this position places on your back and the fact that the neck is turned to one side. If you prefer this position, try to keep one shoulder slightly back with a pillow under the chest to help keep your neck straighter.

Lying on Your Back

- Place pillows or rolled up sleeping bag under your knees to ease the strain on your lower back
- Use pillows that will keep your head and neck in the neutral or mid-line position

Lying on Your Side

- This is the preferred position to sleep in. The knees should be bent and a pillow placed between them to help keep the spine neutral. Drawing one knee up high and in front causes asymmetry and can result in pain over time.
- If there is a space between your waist and the bed it can be helpful to roll a small towel into a pair of pantyhose and place it around your waistline. This is especially helpful for people with wide hips and a small waist.