

## **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR IMPROVED SLEEP**

### **STANDARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Bed Is For Sleeping Only, so don't get into bed until ready to sleep & do nothing else while in bed). Reading is the only exception, and only if it eventually makes you drowsy!)
2. NEVER WATCH TV IN BED. See #1.
3. No Daytime Naps. No naps after 2:00pm EVER, PERIOD (Consider Relaxation!).
4. Get Out of Bed If You Can't Sleep rather than worry or toss & turn.
5. Go to Bed the Same Time Every Night. If you can't sleep, get out of bed (See #4)
6. Get up the Same Time Every Day, Period. Force Yourself.
7. No Caffeine or Alcohol or Liquids after dinner / before bed (except warm milk, cocoa).

### **OPTIONAL ADDITIONS**

8. Try High Carbohydrate-Low Protein Dinners & Evening Snacks. Eat Spaghetti, Pizza, Fruits, starchy carbohydrate foods for dinner & Avoid Corn & Corn Snacks At Dinner & in the evening.
9. Try Warm milk, Hot Cocoa, Bananas, as Evening Snacks.
10. Try an Individualized Relaxation Tape or Relaxing Sound Machine, or White Noise
11. Try Hot Baths Before Retiring.
12. If you awaken in the middle of the night, try getting out of bed, making some warm milk or hot cocoa & eating a banana and/or fruit yogurt. Try reading for a while & then return to bed after an hour or so, or when you become more drowsy. Consider performing a boring, monotonous task while awake to help make you drowsy.

### **OTHER POSSIBLE SLEEP FACILITATORS**

- 13) Try coffee 20 minutes before retiring to see if it has a paradoxical effect.
- 14) Try herbal (decaffeinated) tea 15 minutes before retiring.
- 15) Take a Yoga Course.
- 16) Buy a massage book and try using it with your partner.
- 17) Try non-aerobic exercise 30 minutes before retiring.
- 18) Try aerobic exercise 30 minutes before retiring.
- 19) Take one or two deep relaxation breaks (using tape for 20 minutes) during the day.
- 20) For members of Couples: Massage &/or Affection &/or, "Touchy" Sex. (Sex for relaxation & not for orgasm). Or, sex for orgasm.
- 21) Try all of above and combine those that seem helpful.

*OR, try all of them in different combinations to try to find a helpful combination.*

### **FINAL OPTION:**

- 22) If nothing seems to work for a given period, forget sleep, don't worry about it, get up immediately & do something that needs to be done, & feel good about using your time wisely.

Addendum: Boredom is an age old remedy for sleep. Thoughts which alert us (e.g., things we forgot, desirous wishes, etc.) interfere with sleep. Try thinking only boring thoughts. Try to eliminate interesting or alerting or anxiety evoking thoughts. One way to do this if thoughts are especially difficult to stop (e.g., by thought chopping them) is to transform them by controlling your images & thoughts to make them boring. For example, if you are thinking about an upcoming day or events or person, make it or them boring experiences (e.g., the day is rainy and everyone is boring; the person is monotonous and says or does nothing worth paying attention to, etc.. Also, consider scheduling the most boring, avoided task / chore that you have put off, for times when you can't sleep.

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