

How to Get a Good Night Sleep

During this COVID-19 time, you may be experiencing a lack of a good night sleep or maybe this has been a struggle/challenge all along for you. According to the NIA, there are several reasons/causes for not getting good sleep at night.

Some of these reasons can be due to:

- *Feeling sick, even allergies.*
- *Having pain, such as a headache, body aches, chronic pain.*
- *Some medications and/or their interactions.*

All adults should try to have 7-9 hours of sleep a night. As we age, we tend to go to sleep early and wake up early. Changes in our sleep patterns are a normal process of aging. According to the National Sleep Foundation, sleep occurs in different stages which includes the dreamless light stage and the deep sleep with occasional active dreaming stage (REM). Older adults spend more time in the light sleep stage. If we don't get enough sleep, we may become irritable, forgetful or depressed. We may start to have memory problems or even falls or accidents.

Here are some ways you may find helpful in getting a good night sleep, according to the NIA:

- ***Exercise regularly*** each day. However, do not exercise 3 hours before bedtime.
- ***Avoid large meals before bedtime and don't have caffeine*** (coffee, chocolate, tea, soda) late in the day. These can keep you awake.
- ***Make a bedtime routine*** by going to bed at night and getting up in the morning at the same time each day. Continue doing this, as well, on weekends and when traveling.
- ***Avoid late afternoon or evening naps.*** Naps this late in the day can make it harder to fall asleep at night.
- ***Make it a habit to relax before bedtime.*** Do this by soaking in a tub, reading a book, listening to music. Alcohol makes it more difficult to stay asleep even in small doses. Keep your bedroom quiet and decluttered, too.
- ***Keep your bedroom at a comfortable temperature and use low lighting*** to help relax you.
- ***Avoid watching TV or being on your phone, computer, tablet*** before bedtime. The light from these devices and scary, unsettling movies can keep you from falling asleep.
- ***You can also try to count slowly to a 100 or count back from a 100.***

By following these suggestions/recommendations from the NIA, you may find you have a better night sleep!! So, dim the lights, cool down the room, turn on some soft music and float away to ZZ land!

For further information, go to www.nia.nih.gov or www.SleepFoundation.org.