



Women's Mid-Life Health Centre of Saskatchewan

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Frequently Asked Questions



I can't sleep, what can I do?!!!

Many women suffer from sleep problems during the peri/post menopause for a variety of reasons. If you are not getting the sleep you need, talk with your doctor. To be able to function well, we need to feel well rested when we awake in the morning. If "well rested" isn't how you would describe how you feel, ask for help.

Here are a few tips that may help you establish some healthy habits that promote sleep. These have been compiled from a number of expert resources:

1. Use the bedroom for sleep and sex only. No TV, laptop or pets in the bed.
2. If you can't fall asleep after 15 to 20 minutes, get out of bed and do something relaxing. Return to bed when you feel tired enough to sleep.
3. Avoid any mentally or physically stimulating activity before bed. Don't go to bed angry or focused on your worries. Plan physical activity 2 to 4 hours prior to bed time. (Sex seems not to cause a problem prior to sleep).
4. Don't eat a spicy or heavy meal before bed. Indigestion or heartburn may result.
5. Turn your alarm clock toward the wall to avoid the temptation of checking the time when you wake up during the night. Trust your alarm will wake you at the time you set it.
6. Enjoy a relaxing bedtime ritual. Go to bed at the same time each night, read for relaxation or listen to relaxing music. This sets the tone for a peaceful sleep.
7. Avoid daytime or evening naps. If you desperately need a nap, take a 10 to 20 minute power snooze, get up and get going again. No languishing on the sofa!
8. Exercise daily for at least 30 minutes, alternate strength training with brisk heart stimulating activity...but not too close to bedtime.
9. Try a comfortable temperature shower or bath (not a hot soak) or a warm drink (without caffeine or alcohol) to help you relax in the evening.
10. Cut down or eliminate cigarette smoking. Limit caffeine to the early part of the day only. No alcohol before bed.
11. Ensure your sleep environment is quiet, dark, safe and comfortable.
12. Relaxation strategies can help. Try deep breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, meditation, imagery training, biofeedback, or stretching exercises.
13. Manage pain. Acute or chronic pain interferes with getting to sleep or staying asleep. Follow the advice of your health care providers regarding pain management and sleep.
14. Check out credible resources that can give you more specific information about your situation.

Websites to check out:

Canadian Sleep Society www.css.to/centres.html
National Sleep Foundation www.sleepfoundation.org
Canadian Sleep Institute (Alberta) www.csisleep.com
The Lung Association (sleep apnea support groups) www.lung.sk.ca
Associated Sleep Services (Saskatoon) www.associatedsleepservices.com

Support

Inform

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