

## Sleep Hygiene

Good, uninterrupted sleep is essential for optimal pain relief.

There are some medications that can assist with sleep. However, it is preferable to be able to achieve adequate sleep with the use of minimal medication. Listed below are a few tips that can be incorporated into your daily routine to help with sleep.

These guidelines are referred to as "Good sleep hygiene." It may not be possible to follow all of these recommendations. However, try to add one or two at a time and gradually incorporate more as you feel ready.

1. Try to go to sleep at the same time each night. This will help your body set its internal clock and eventually your body will recognize that it is time to go to sleep.
2. Try to wake up at the same time each morning – even on weekends.
3. Try to limit the amount of caffeine you consume. Remember that drinks other than coffee, such as soda and tea, may contain caffeine.
4. Avoid caffeine after 1 pm.
5. Avoid meals just prior to sleep.
6. Avoid doing things in bed such as reading, watching TV, playing cards, listening to the radio, eating and playing video games. The bed (and if possible the bedroom) should be for sleep and sex only.
7. Try to sleep with clean sheets and pillowcases.
8. A warm shower 30 minutes prior to sleep can be helpful.
9. Exercise regularly, but avoid exercise just before going to sleep. This will increase your sympathetic nervous system (adrenaline) and may make it difficult to fall asleep.
10. If you are still having difficulties, other tests may be performed, such as a "sleep study," and there may be some effective medications to help you sleep. Any action taken should be communicated to your primary care physician.