

Tips for Managing Insomnia (difficulty sleeping)

Things you can do on your own



- Avoid caffeine and alcohol for at least 6 hours before bedtime
- Drink warm milk or decaffeinated tea at bedtime
- Take a warm bath to help you relax
- Try to avoid napping during the day
- Try meditation, guided imagery, progressive muscle relaxation, or massage
- Try [biofeedback](#), hypnosis, and [thought stopping](#)
- Try deep breathing
- Stay away from screens (phone, tablet, TV) before bedtime, and avoid screens in bed
- Establish a bedtime routine and try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day
- Exercise during the day, but not within 3 hours of bedtime
 - Try to be active for at least 15-30 minutes every day. Walking is a good option. If 30 minutes of exercise is too hard, break it up into shorter sessions. For example, try three 10-minute sessions.
- Try cognitive behavioral therapy with a certified therapist
- Try to continue with your normal activities

See the Other Resources page for more information

With over-the-counter medications



- You can try one of the medications below to help with your insomnia. You can buy them at your local pharmacy. Take them as directed on the package:
 - If your insomnia is related to mild to moderate pain, taking pain medication such as Acetaminophen (Tylenol®) may help
 - Benadryl is an antihistamine that is available in pill or liquid form. It may help make you feel sleepy
 - Melatonin can help some people sleep

REMINDER - Always keep your care team updated about over-the-counter medicines you are taking. If your care team tells you they are not safe for you, do not take them.

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With the help of your care team



- Ask your care team about a prescription sleeping pill, such as Ramelteon (Rozerem®), Zolpidem (Ambien®), or Eszopiclone (Lunesta®)
- If your insomnia is related to severe pain, taking prescription pain medication may help
- If your insomnia is related to depression or anxiety, taking an antidepressant or anti-anxiety medication may help
 - Examples include: mirtazapine (Remeron®), paroxetine (Paxil®), lorazepam (Ativan®), diazepam (Valium®)
- Talk to your care team about what is causing your insomnia

When to call your care team for help



- If you are confused during the night

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