

## **Tips for getting a better night sleep**

There are any number of reasons why people have trouble sleeping at night. We are going to go over several common causes and solutions to these problems.

- Many people say that they are tired but when it comes time to go to sleep their mind is going a mile and minute and they cannot get it to shut off. When this is the cause a lot of people need a distraction from their brain so they can go to sleep. It is a matter of shifting your focus. Meditation works very well for these people with some practice (it can be difficult at first). One thing that we have found to be effective is an iPhone/iPad app called iSleep easy. It is a meditation app specifically for helping people fall asleep. You will want to look for it in your app store but this is the link for it:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/isleep-easy-meditations-for/id509260769?mt=8>

There is both a free and paid version of this. Start with the free version and see if it is of any benefit and if you want you can upgrade to the paid version. With this app you can customize play lists and music to help get the best night sleep possible.

- If you do not want to download an app and want something a little more simple you can do, you can look into the 4-7-8 breathing technique:

<http://www.medicaldaily.com/life-hack-sleep-4-7-8-breathing-exercise-will-supposedly-put-you-sleep-just-60-332122>

I have a friend with sleeping problems who swears by this. He says that when he does it he will usually wake up the next morning feeling great and completely forgets that he even did it.

- Many patients complain of not being able to get comfortable in bed when they lay down to go to sleep. These people will toss and turn all night. Once they find a comfortable position they think that they are going to finally get some sleep only to find that position is no longer comfortable and they need to move around all over again. This can be problematic for not only the person trying to get comfortable, but anyone else that is sharing the bed with this individual. There are a few things to look at in this scenario:

How old is your bed? Having an old bed that does not fully support your weight while sleeping is problematic. It can cause you to be put in to positions that your body cannot be in comfortably.

With pillows the thing to keep in mind is that everyone's neck is different and it is a matter finding the right size for you. If the pillow is too firm, if you're sleeping on your back it will push your head too far forward and if you're on your side it will put too much side bend in the neck. The opposite is true if the pillow is too

soft. The big thing to keep in mind is that the neck should be in a straight line in either position.

A lot of times with patients it is not their bed or pillow, but their body. When our spine is out of alignment it is difficult to get comfortable in any position. This gets harder when we are trying to get ourselves to go to sleep. We don't have anything else to focus on other than how uncomfortable we are. If you are having trouble getting comfortable, make an appointment with our chiropractors to see if that is the issue. If you are a current patient who has not been seen in a while, this is usually a good indicator that it is time to get in for an adjustment.

- There are a couple of different supplements and herbs that help with occasional sleeplessness. Things like melatonin, valerian root, and chamomile tea are non-habit forming methods so they may be worth a try.
- Do not eat carbs around bed time. Carbs are the most readily available source of energy in our diets and can definitely give you more energy when you are trying to wind down for the day.