

Appendix 7.4

Sleep Hygiene Program*

Healthy Habits to Promote Good Sleep

- Maintain the same bed and wake time daily.
- Establish a fixed bed-time routine. A warm bath and/or light massage before bed may be helpful.
- The need for a nap should be evaluated depending on the time post-injury and severity of daytime sleepiness (and not fatigue). In the acute stage post injury (i.e., first few hours/days), naps are a natural part of the recovery process and should not be limited. Consult a doctor or emergency department if you are not easily awoken in the first few hours or days after your injury. Beyond the acute period, naps should be avoided as to promote night-time sleep and should not impede gradual return to activity.
- If sleepiness is significant and naps cannot be avoided, ideally naps should be limited to one per day, shorter than 30 minutes, and be taken before 3:00 PM. When napping, attempt to fall asleep in bed (not in another room, or in front of the tv, etc.).

Nutrition, Exercise and Lifestyle

- Avoid consumption of caffeine within 4-6 hours of bedtime.
- Avoid consumption of alcohol too close to bedtime. When metabolized, alcohol can produce awakenings or lighter sleep.
- Avoid heavy meals late in the evening.
- Consider adding a bedtime snack containing protein. Avoid sugar 4 hours before bedtime.
- Adequate vitamin and mineral intake is important to help the body produce melatonin, which promotes sleep. Make sure there is enough magnesium, iron and B vitamins in the diet.
- When tolerated and medically indicated, encourage 30-60 minutes of vigorous exercise a day, as regular exercise promotes sleep. Avoid exercising within two hours of sleep.
- Expose yourself to natural light during the day.

Sleeping Environment

- The sleeping area should be dark, cool and comfortable.
- Ideally there should be no source of light in the bedroom while sleeping.
- The room should be clean, tidy and quiet (e.g., neutral or natural sounds can be helpful to block out distracting sounds)
- The bed and bedroom should be reserved for sleep. Other activities (reading, watching TV, using internet, playing games) should take place in another room. Ideally there should be no electronic equipment in the bedroom. If this is unavoidable, make sure that all computers, tablets, cell phones etc are either turned off or at the very least in 'sleep' mode.
- Having a digital clock in the bedroom with numbers that 'light up is not recommended. If there is, it should be turned away from the bed. If the individual awakes in the night, it is recommended not to look at the clock.

Refer to the Canadian Sleep Society website <http://www.canadiansleepsociety.ca/tours> for further information and specific resources, available in both English and French (Publications section).

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