

## Tips for Improving Your Sleep

**Try the following ideas as they will help you get a better sleep**

### **Each day try to:**

- Keep a regular schedule. Go to bed and get up at the same time even on weekends. If needed use an alarm so you wake up at the same time.
- Go outside, especially during the morning to noon time of day so you get some outdoor daylight.
- Avoid taking long naps during the day as it can disturb your nighttime sleep. If you nap, nap as early in the day as possible and keep naps short (<20 minutes).

### **Get regular exercise:**

- Exercise will improve your sleep and mood.
- Try to exercise at least 30 minutes every day. You can break the exercise sessions into shorter time periods for example 10 minute sessions.
- Walking is an ideal exercise.
- Avoid exercising right before bedtime.

### **Before going to bed:**

- Try taking a warm shower. When the heat source is taken away, your body temperature will drop and this signals your brain to go to sleep.
- Avoid stimulants like caffeine and alcohol, 4 -6 hours before bedtime.
- Avoid eating (especially a large meal) and drinking lots of fluids 4 hours before bedtime.
- Avoid stressful activities right before bedtime (for e.g. paying bills)

### **Make your bedroom a place that promotes sleep:**

- Do not use your bedroom as an office. It is better to do activities in another room and reserve your bedroom for sleeping.
- Make your room quiet. Turn off distractions like phones etc.
- Make your room dark, cover all LED lights eg. power bars.
- Keep your room a cool temperature. Cool temperatures signal the body to sleep.
- At night, cover all clocks. The light emitted is not helpful and also it is not good to "watch the clock".
- Avoid using your computer, tablet or watching TV, 30-60 minutes before bedtime. These devices emit a blue light which can make falling asleep more difficult.

***Do not lie in bed for a long time trying to fall asleep. If you cannot sleep after 15 minutes, get up and do something. Go back to bed when you feel tired.***

***Remember, even if your sleep is disrupted, get up at the same time in the morning, do not sleep in.***