

I don't sleep well, what can I do?

People with ADHD often have sleep difficulties. They may have trouble going to bed because they continually feel the need to move around or have too many ideas storming in their head, stopping them from sleeping. Some play computer games, watch television or surf the Internet without realizing the passing hours. Others delay going to bed by ignoring the early warning signs of sleep. Several say they have difficulties waking up the next morning, comparing it to suffering from "jet lag." With medication, certain people notice that they are less agitated during the evening and night, while others have difficulties adjusting their sleep.



Here are some basic tips that can help promote sleep. These "sleep hygiene" advices are not specific to people with ADHD and are frequently suggested by sleep specialists to "insomniacs" in general.

- ✓ To optimize sleep, it is important to be in a quiet and comfortable atmosphere.
- ✓ Limite the use of the bed to sleep only. In insomnia cases, the bed should not be used to read, watch TV, or do homework or work.
- ✓ Try to set healthy goals by going to bed and waking up at reasonable and regular hours every day.
- ✓ Have a routine that leads gradually to sleep. Avoid overstimulation in the evening. Watching television and playing video games or chatting on the Internet do not foster sleep.
- ✓ If sleep does not come after 20 to 30 minutes, get up and do a NEUTRAL activity which will lead to mental fatigue, such as reading, until feeling sleepy.
- ✓ Avoid lying around in bed in the morning and daytime naps for this may disrupt the sleep cycle.
- ✓ Favor physical exercise during the day but avoid it a minimum of two hours before bedtime.

Sometimes, sleep disorders can be a sign of anxiety, depression or other problems. Some medications can affect sleep while others can promote it.

If these basic advices are not enough to restore sleep and you are concerned about the adverse effects associated with lack of sleep, it is important to discuss it with a health professional like your doctor or your pharmacist.