

***Sleep Habit Rules and Rationale***

**Rule 1: Select a standard wake-up time.**

Use it every day regardless of the sleep you obtain on any particular night.

**Rule 2: Use the bed only for sleeping.**

Do not read, eat, watch TV, etc. in bed. Sexual activity is the only exception.

**Rule 3: Get up when you can't sleep.**

When you are unable to sleep, get up and go to another room. Engage in a relaxing activity until you feel sleepy enough to fall asleep quickly before returning to bed. Get up again if sleep does not come on quickly.

**Rule 4: Don't worry, plan, or ruminate in bed.**

If you begin this mental activity automatically in bed, get up and go to a different room until you can return to bed without these mental activities interfering with your sleep.

**Rule 5: Avoid daytime napping.**

Napping, particularly in the late afternoon or early evening may interfere with your night's sleep.

**Rule 6: Go to bed only when you are sleepy, but not before the time suggested.**

Long periods of time in bed will lead to shallow, fragmented sleep. You should spend only the amount of time in bed that you actually need for sleep.

**Other Instructions:**

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## **Rationale:**

**Rule 1:** First, it is important that you choose a standard wake-up time and stick to it every day regardless of how much sleep you actually get on any given night. This practice will help you develop a more stable sleep pattern. As discussed in the sleep education handout, changes in your sleep-wake schedule can disturb your sleep. In fact, you can create the type of sleep problem that occurs in jetlag by varying your wake-up time from day to day. If you stick to a standard wake-up time, you will soon notice that you usually will become sleepy at about the right time each evening to allow you to get the sleep you need.

**Rule 2:** While in bed, you should avoid doing things that you do when you are awake. Do not read, watch T.V., eat, study, use the phone, or do other things that require you to be awake while you are in bed. If you frequently use your bed for activities other than sleep, you are unintentionally training yourself to stay awake in bed. If you avoid these activities while in bed, your bed will eventually become a place where it is easy to go to sleep and stay asleep. Sexual activity is the only exception to this rule.

**Rule 3:** Never stay in bed, either at the beginning of the night or during the middle of the night, for extended periods of time without being asleep. Long periods of being awake in bed usually lead to tossing and turning, becoming frustrated, or worrying about not sleeping. These reactions, in turn, make it more difficult to fall asleep. Also, if you lie in bed awake for long periods of time, you are training yourself to be awake in bed. When sleep does not come on or return quickly, it is best to get up, go to another room, and only return to bed when you feel sleepy enough to fall asleep quickly. Generally speaking, you should get up if you find yourself awake for 20 minutes or so and you do not feel as though you are about to go to sleep.

**Rule 4:** Do not worry, mull over your problems, plan future events, or do other thinking while in bed. These activities are bed mental habits. If your mind seems to be racing or you can't seem to shut off your thoughts, get up and go to another room until you can return to bed without this thinking interrupting your sleep. If this disruptive thinking occurs frequently, you may find it helpful to routinely set aside a time early each evening to do the thinking, problem-solving, and planning you need to do. If you start this practice you probably will have fewer intrusive thoughts while you are in bed.

**Rule 5:** You should avoid all daytime napping. Sleeping during the day partially satisfies your sleep needs and, thus, will weaken your sleep drive at night.

**Rule 6:** In general, you should go to bed when you feel sleepy. However, you should not go to bed so early that you find yourself spending far more time in bed each night than you need for sleep. Spending too much time in bed will fragment and break up your night of sleep. If you spend too much time in bed, you may actually make your sleep problem worse. We will help you decide the amount of time to spend in bed and what times you should go to bed at night and get out of bed in the morning.