

## Guidelines for Better Sleep

### Food, Caffeine, and Alcohol

- Do not drink caffeine after 4:00PM
- Do not eat a big or spicy meal late in the evening
- Do not go to bed hungry
- Avoid alcohol

### Physical Exercise

- Try to get some exercise everyday
- Do not exercise immediately before bedtime

### Regular Sleeping Routine

- Try to go to bed and wake up at roughly the same time each day
- Have a regular bedtime routine (e.g. herbal tea, brushing teeth)
- Avoid naps during the daytime

### Set the Mood

- Relax your body one hour before bedtime. Avoid scary movies, stressful news, or activities that accelerate the heart rate
- No electronic media in the hour before bedtime
- Dim lights in house in the hour before bedtime
- Keep your room clean, inviting, and serene
- When you lay down to sleep, make sure the room is sufficiently dark
- Experiment with essential oils that can aid in sleep (e.g. lavender)

### Pre-Sleep Breathing

- 30 minutes before sleep, engage in a relaxation breathing exercise.
- Example: inhale for a 4-count, hold the breath for a 7-count, exhale for an 8-count, and repeat (i.e. beginning with inhale). Continue for several minutes, allowing your counting to be at a speed that is comfortable for you.
- Example: inhale for a 4-count, exhale for a 4-count, and repeat (i.e. inhaling again). Continue for several minutes, allowing your counting to be at a speed that is comfortable for you.

### Beds are for Sleeping

- Limit use of your bed for sleeping and sex.
- Do not use the bed for other activities, such as reading, surfing the internet on your laptop, etc.