

# STRATEGIES TO HELP Promote Sleep

## **Sleep hygiene strategies:**

- Avoid caffeinated foods and drinks such as coffee, tea, chocolate and soft drinks after lunch.
- Exercise when possible but avoid exercising two hours before bedtime.
- Expose yourself to sunlight during the day.
- Sleep in a dark, cool, quiet and relaxing room.
- Develop a bedtime ritual (e.g., warm milk before bedtime or a high protein, light snack).
- Use your bed only for sleeping and intimacy.
- Go to bed at the same time each night.
- Turn off the TV and computer before bedtime.
- Put your smart phone or tablet away before getting in bed.

## **Sleep restriction strategies:**

- Get up at the same time each day. Add one more hour of sleep if you feel ill or not able to get up at the scheduled time in the morning.
- Limit naps to no more than two a day, each lasting less than 30 minutes.

## **Relaxation strategies:**

- Take a warm shower or bath before going to bed.
- Try relaxing activities before bed such as: reading, meditation, prayer or music.
- Use meditation, massage, progressive relaxation, guided imagery or other strategies to decrease stress.
- Guided imagery and relaxation exercises are available to view on the in-hospital TV.

### Other strategies:

- Keep yourself as active as possible during the day to help with promoting sleep at night (check with your doctor for what forms of exercise are safest for you).
- Other symptoms, such as pain or fatigue, can affect your sleep. If you are currently experiencing other symptoms, please talk to your doctor about how to best manage these symptoms.
- Some medications can interfere with sleep. Ask your doctor or nurse to review your prescriptions for this side effect.
- If you are worried, depressed or anxious, talk to your doctor about resources to help you cope with these concerns.

There are many medications (over the counter or prescribed) to help you sleep. Sleep medications have side effects. Please ask your doctor before taking any medicine for sleep.