



What to Do When You Can't Sleep

There is no single remedy that works for everyone, but here are 2 tips that can help you both fall asleep and stay asleep:

1. Write down your worries

I have found that many people struggle with falling asleep due to their anxious thoughts. These anxious thoughts may be about anything, but some common concerns include:

- A strained personal relationship
- Money-related problems
- A fight with a co-worker
- A medical-related issue

Regardless of why you are anxious, your stress can make it difficult for you to fall asleep and stay asleep.



One helpful way to address your stress is to keep a journal. For example, each night before bed you can make it a practice to write down what is bothering you, as well as any other related thoughts. You can also try journaling if you find yourself waking up in the middle of the night and unable to return to sleep due to your anxious thoughts. When you find that you cannot return to sleep after awakening, it is best to get out of bed and journal somewhere else.

When journaling at night after awakening, you should describe your concerns, then make a plan for the following day to address your concerns. After this is done, remind yourself that there is nothing more that can be done that night about that particular worry. This can help you "let go" of the concern for the night, knowing you will deal with it the following day.

There is no right or wrong way to journal, but I suggest you begin with 10 to 15 minutes each night. And again, it may be best to do your nighttime journaling somewhere other than your bed.

In addition to relieving your anxiety, journaling may also help you sleep through nightly repetition (which is part of practicing good sleep hygiene) - as this signals to your body that it is time for rest.

2. Get plenty of aerobic exercise

Numerous studies have revealed the strong connection between regular aerobic exercise and better sleep. The good news is that you don't have to be a marathon runner to experience these benefits. Instead, if you commit to 20-30 minutes of aerobic exercise per day you may see significant improvements when it comes to your sleep patterns.



Great aerobic options include:

- Running
- Walking
- Biking
- Swimming

Be warned that a common mistake people make is exercising too close to their bed time (within 2-4 hours). This can raise your heart rate, which in turn may make it more difficult for you to fall asleep. However, a few people find that exercising close to their bed time is best for falling asleep - so it may take a process of trial and error to find your ideal workout time.

Like many people, a medical condition may make it hard for you to exercise. If this is the case, consider one of the following low-impact options:

- Water therapy
- Riding an exercise bike
- Using an elliptical machine

If you continue to struggle with sleep disruption for more than 4 weeks, make sure to speak with a doctor. She or he can help formulate a comprehensive plan to tackle your sleep-related issues.

For more helpful information to lead a healthier and happier lifestyle, give our office a call today.

Rasmussen Chiropractic

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