HEALTHY SLEEP
Concussion/Mild Traumatic Brain Injury

Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center

Getting restful sleep is one of the most important things you can do for your health, and it often takes preparation during the day. Improve your sleep regimen with these healthy sleep tips.

1. Keep a regular sleep schedule. Go to bed at the same time every day, and get up at the same time, regardless of how much sleep you get.
2. Do NOT exercise close to bedtime.
3. Avoid naps.
4. Avoid caffeine-containing foods or drinks — such as chocolate, energy drinks and soda — at least 6 hours before bedtime.
5. Avoid alcohol, nicotine, heavy meals and drinking a lot of liquids close to bedtime.
6. Promote a sleep-friendly environment — minimize noise and light, and keep a cool but comfortable temperature.
7. Relax before bedtime — have a warm shower or soak in the tub, meditate, do yoga stretches or try progressive muscle relaxation (see back for details). Do NOT work on the computer, read, play video games or watch TV in bed.
8. Go to bed only when you are sleepy. If you can't fall asleep within 15 to 20 minutes, go to another room. Keep the lights dim and do something relaxing, but avoid using the TV, computer or phone.
9. Use the bed for sleep and intimacy only. Remove your TV, radio, smartphone, tablets, computers and other electronic devices from the bedroom.
10. Schedule 7 to 8 hours of sleep.
11. Get exposure to natural light as much as possible. For example, spend some time outside or close to a window.
12. Talk to your health care provider before taking any over-the-counter medications or supplements. If you have been prescribed sleep medications, take them as instructed.

Released June 2014 | Revised November 2016 by Defense and Veterans Brain Injury Center, a Defense Centers of Excellence for Psychological Health and Traumatic Brain Injury Center
This product is reviewed annually and is current until superseded. **800-870-9244 • dvbic.dcoe.mil**
PUID 4009

PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION

Progressive muscle relaxation helps release tension from muscles. To do it, focus on tightening and then releasing one muscle group at a time. Try some of these techniques:

Hands	Clench each fist. Then release.
Upper arms	Bend elbows and “make a muscle.” Release.
Shoulders	Lift your shoulders towards your ears. Release.
Neck	Let your neck drop to your chest. Lift and release.
Face	Scrunch up your face. Release.
Chest	Tighten your chest muscles. Release.
Upper back	Pull shoulders forward. Release.
Lower back	Roll head and upper back down and forward, touching your toes while sitting in a chair. Roll up and release.
Thighs	Tense your thigh muscles while sitting with knees bent at a 90-degree angle. Release.
Calves	Lift toes off of the ground towards your shins. Release.
Feet	Gently curl toes down so they are pressing into the floor. Release.

SMARTPHONE APP:

The Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-i) Coach mobile app includes a sleep diary that can help you pinpoint behaviors that are contributing to your sleep problems. After you enter your daily sleep data, the app will calculate your total time in bed, total time asleep and sleep efficiency.

Available on the App Store

Google play

ONLINE DIARY:

To access a daily sleep diary, learn about harmful sleep habits and hear personal stories, visit afterdeployment.dcoe.mil, and click on the sleep icon.

WARFIGHTER SLEEP KITS:

You can order the Warfighter Sleep Kit at https://dvbic.dcoe.mil/material/sleep-kit. It contains a sleep mask, ear plugs and educational material.