

Having Sleep Issues During this Pandemic?

Keeping up with the news these days can be extra anxiety-inducing with COVID-19 and government stay-at-home orders dominating the headlines. The rising number of cases, risk, and the economy is hard to get off our minds. It's understandable that these thoughts could keep your mind wired at night, preventing you from being able to fall asleep or get a good quality sleep the whole night through.



What Can We Do?

- **Try to keep a consistent daytime routine and consistent sleep schedule.** Go to bed at the same time every night and wake at the same time every day.
- **Get outside for some fresh air during light hours.** Perhaps take a walk. Exposing yourself to as much light as possible during day hours and avoiding bright light during dark hours helps with the sleep cycle. Being outside is also great for mental health.
- **Get some exercise in the morning or afternoon.** Exercising earlier in the day (at least 3 hours before bedtime) allows your body to go into a deeper sleep at night.
- **Remember to wind down before going to bed!** Try spending the last hour before going to bed doing something calming such as bedtime yoga, meditation, prayer, relaxing music, reading a book, taking a hot bath and drinking herbal tea with no caffeine.



What To Avoid

- **Large quantities of alcohol.** Especially near bedtime. Alcohol can really interrupt your sleep and while it may help you fall asleep, you will not get a good quality deep sleep if you drink too much.
- **Too much stimulation at night especially visual stimulation.** TV, cell phone, computer, social media, etc. If you are going to watch TV before bedtime - don't watch it IN bed and be sure to watch something easy going.
- **Exercise right before bedtime.**
- **Caffeine or sugar at night.** Individuals should become very familiar with how their body reacts to caffeine and what time they should stop drinking it. Caffeine can stay in your system for a long time.
- **Eating a large meal right before bed.** Give your body time to digest.
- **Napping.** Although there are exceptions to this rule. Such as if you'll be operating heavy machinery, driving, or engaging in jobs or activities that make them dangerous to do while tired. In those cases, sleeping in or napping might be necessary.