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**Staff & Faculty Consultation Center**

**Better Sleep Tips**

**Do not nap during the day.** If you are having trouble sleeping at night, try not to nap during the day, because you will throw off your body clock and make it even more difficult to sleep at night.

**Limit Caffeine and Alcohol.** Although alcohol may initially act as a sedative, it can interrupt normal sleep patterns.

**Don’t smoke.** Nicotine is a stimulant and can make it difficult to fall asleep and stay asleep.

**Expose yourself to bright light/sunlight soon after awakening.** This will help to regulate your body’s natural biological clock. Likewise, try to keep your bedroom dark while you are sleeping so that the light will not interfere with your rest.

**Exercise early in the day.** Twenty to thirty minutes of exercise every day can help you sleep, but be sure to exercise in the morning or afternoon. Exercise stimulates the body and aerobic activity before bedtime may make falling asleep more difficult.

**Check your iron level.** Iron-deficient women tend to have more problems sleeping, so if your blood is poor in iron, a supplement might help your health and your ability to sleep.

 **Tips for a Better Sleep Environment**

**Make sure your bed is large enough and comfortable.** If you are disturbed by a restless bedmate, switch to a queen or king-sized bed. Test different types of mattresses. Try therapeutic shaped foam pillows that cradle your neck or extra pillows that help you sleep on your side. Get comfortable cotton sheets.

**Make sure your bedroom primarily a place for sleeping.** It is not a good idea to use your bed for paying bills, doing work, etc. Help your body recognize that this is a place for rest or intimacy.

**Keep your bedroom peaceful and comfortable.** Make sure your room is well ventilated and the temperature is consistent, and try to keep it quiet. You could use a fan or a “white noise” machine to help block outside noises.

**Hide your clock.** A big, illuminated digital clock may cause you to focus on the time and make you feel stressed and anxious. Place your clock so you can’t see the time when you are in bed.