

## **SLEEP PRESCRIPTION**

*Consistency in your sleep routine is very important.  
Please follow the following guidelines very closely.*

**WAKE UP TIME** - Regardless of what time you actually fall asleep, keep a consistent awakening time. This will help your body become used to a routine. Your body works backward from your wake-up time. If you are consistent in your waking time, you will begin to get sleepy seven to nine hours prior to your wake up time. It takes about two weeks to establish this pattern.

**WORRY TIME** - Give yourself about fifteen to twenty minutes in the early evening to actually sit down and worry. Allow your mind to wander and go over all the things that you think you might be worrying about when you would normally be in bed. Write all of these down. Then, if you think about something when you are trying to fall asleep, you will be able to console yourself that it is on your list to take care of tomorrow.

**EXERCISE** - Getting some amount of consistent exercise on a daily basis four to six hours prior to bedtime can be extremely helpful. This will reduce mental stress and create physical tiredness that promotes sleep.

**BATH TIME** - A long (fifteen to twenty minutes minimum) hot bath taken two to three hours before bedtime can be very relaxing. Some studies suggest hot baths promote a bodily temperature that is advantageous to sleep.

**WHAT'S THE BED FOR?** The bed is for sleeping and enjoying closeness with your spouse only. Please avoid reading or watching television in bed. These activities are fine to do in your den or in a chair in your bedroom although it would be best for you to have the focus of your bedroom being just for sleep and intimacy.

**CLOCKS** - Hide all clocks or at least turn them away from your line of sight so that you cannot see them to tell the time. This way, if you wake in the night, you won't upset yourself with the time.

**RELAXATION** - Make sure to do one of your relaxation routines when you get in bed. This will allow you to keep your mind focused and not let it begin straying into worry. This will also allow your body to relax and allow you to drift off to sleep. Do the routine again, from memory, if you happen to wake up in the night.

**EATING** - Avoid eating anything of significance, or drinking any large quantities, two hours before bedtime. This will eliminate your tummy feeling too full, having to get up to go to the restroom as frequently, and will give your metabolism time to begin to digest.