

# Sleep Hygiene Methods

## Start with Non-Medicine options

- Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. Do not sleep in to make up for missed sleep.
- Go to bed when tired.
- Create a dark, quiet, and cool place to sleep.
- Use the bedroom only for sleeping or sexual activity. Do not eat, work, or watch television in bed.
- If you cannot fall asleep within 30 minutes, get out of bed and go to an other room. Do relaxing activities until you become sleepy.
- 4 hours before going to bed avoid :
  - Caffeine
  - Smoking/Nicotine
  - Exercise
  - Heavy meal
- Avoid drinking extra liquids after dinner. If you wake up to go to the bathroom, you may have trouble going back to sleep.
- Avoid alcohol. Alcohol causes less restful sleep. It leaves you tired when you wake up.
- Limit naps to less than 30 minutes.
- Practice relaxation methods before bed.
  - Soft music
  - Warm bath or shower
  - Meditation

## Natural Medicine

- VA does not provide natural or herbal medicine.
- These may interact with some prescription medicine you are taking

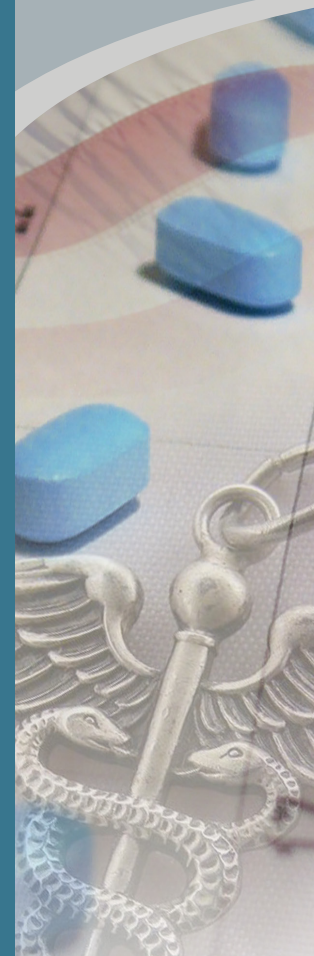
*Talk to your health care provider before starting any medicine for sleep to check for side effects or drug interactions.*



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## Understanding Your Sleep Medicine



Insomnia has many causes. Talk to your provider about the different treatments and get help for your sleep.



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## Treatments

### Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)

- Most effective treatment
- Talk therapy
- No drug side effects
- Long-term benefits
- It is therapy with a trained provider
- You identify and change beliefs that cause or worsen sleep problems
- CBT helps you develop good sleep habits

### Sleep Hygiene

- Used in combination with other treatments-see back of brochure

### Medicine

- Some sleep medicine may make insomnia worse
- The treatment will depend on whether your problem involves falling asleep or staying asleep

**30% of Americans suffer from insomnia every year**

## Common Prescription Sleep Medicines

### Trazodone (Desyrel)

Side effects are rare and may include:

- low blood pressure
- prolonged painful erection (with high doses)

### Zolpidem (Ambien)

Side effects may include:

- walking, eating or driving in your sleep
- dizziness, headache, risk for addiction

## Options for Some Patients

### Prazosin (Minipress)

Sometimes used for **PTSD nightmares**

Side effects may include:

- low blood pressure,
- dizziness,
- headache

## Side Effects: The Good, The Bad and The Ugly

### Quetiapine (Seroquel<sup>(R)</sup>)

A side effect of quetiapine is to feel sleepy. Potential unnecessary risks when used for sleep are diabetes, weight gain, high cholesterol, and involuntary movement disorders.



I like my quetiapine!  
I need it to sleep!

You do not have schizophrenia, psychosis, or bipolar disorder. There are better treatment options to help you sleep.

**Do not stop taking your medicine without talking to your provider.  
Do not drink alcohol if you are taking any sleep medicine.**