Sleep and Rest in the Hospital

Getting enough sleep and rest can be a problem when you are in the hospital. This handout will give you some tips to help you get better sleep.

Reasons for Sleep
- Sleep restores energy and helps the body heal.
- Sleep can lower stress and improve coping.
- Sleep can lower confusion, irritability, and restlessness.
- Lack of sleep can lead to a weak immune system. This makes it harder to fight infection.
- Lack of sleep can lower your pain tolerance.

Tips to Help You Sleep
- Let your nurse know about your sleeping habits. Some people use a night light or have a sleeping position that is most comfortable. Others need to adjust the room temperature.
- Let staff know if you prefer to have the door shut or the lights turned off.
- Use ear plugs or a black-out mask.
- Play quiet music. (TV Channel #10 has calming music.)
- Use white noise, like from a fan, to cover hospital sounds.
- Try to stay awake during the day to keep a normal sleeping schedule.
- Discuss your activity orders with your nurse. Get out of bed during the day to a chair and take walks.
- Ask that your family and friends leave before bedtime and to not visit while you are sleeping.
- Review your care plan with your nurse to find times to sleep when you won’t be interrupted.

If you have tried these tips and still have trouble getting enough sleep, talk to your nurse or doctor to figure out what is keeping you awake.

Your health care team may have given you this information as part of your care. If so, please use it and call if you have any questions. If this information was not given to you as part of your care, please check with your doctor. This is not medical advice. This is not to be used for diagnosis or treatment of any medical condition. Because each person's health needs are different, you should talk with your doctor or others on your health care team when using this information. If you have an emergency, please call 911. Copyright ©8/2016. University of Wisconsin Hospitals and Clinics Authority. All rights reserved. Produced by the Department of Nursing. HF#7361.