



SLEEP PROBLEMS: a personal action plan

SELF-CARE TIPS

Many people have trouble sleeping now and then because of stress, worry, or a change in their regular routine or social life. The good news is that you can take control of those situations by making and completing a personal action plan to help you sleep.

Making and completing a personal action plan can help you take control of the areas of your life that affect your sleep habits. These include the environment in which you sleep and your eating, exercising, and relaxation

routines. Personal action plans are short-term plans to help you reach your goal of getting sound, restful sleep. They include a specific action or behavior that you want to do and know that you will be able to accomplish. Your plan must answer these questions:

- What are you going to do?
- How much are you going to do?
- When are you going to do it?
- How many days of the week are you going to do it?

My goal is: to get a good night's sleep

Here are some examples of changes you can make to help you sleep.

For your sleeping environment

- Make your bed and sleeping conditions as comfortable as possible. Limit as many distractions as possible. These include interruptions by children and pets.
- Don't work, eat, read, write, watch TV, talk on the phone, or play computer games in bed.
- Keep your bedroom quiet, dark, and a little bit cool. Using a sleep mask can also help.

Action plan example:

"This week I will not use my laptop in bed (what) at all (how much) after 8 p.m. (when) on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (how many)."

For your eating habit

- Try not to eat heavy meals close to bedtime. This may cause stomach upset or heartburn, which can interfere with falling asleep.
- Drinking too much before going to bed may cause you to have to get up often to urinate. However, don't go to bed when you are very thirsty.
- Limit caffeine and tobacco products, especially close to bedtime. They may help you fall asleep but they are stimulants and will keep you awake later in the night.

Action plan example:

"This week I will limit caffeine (what) by not drinking any soda (how much) after 7 p.m. (when) four nights (how many)."

For your exercise habit

- Get into a regular exercise routine. Walking, biking, and dancing are all great activities. Do them at least five hours before bedtime.

Action plan example:

"This week I will take a walk (what) for 15 minutes (how much) after dinner (when) on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday (how many)."

For your relaxation habit

- Take a warm bath, read a book, or do a relaxing activity before going to bed. Try yoga, meditation, or a muscle relaxation exercise.
- Set aside time for problem solving early in the day so you don't go to bed worrying about your "to do" list.

Action plan example:

"This week I will do a relaxation exercise (what) for 20 minutes (how much) after 8 p.m. (when) on Tuesday and Thursday (how many)."

What will you include in your personal action plan for this week?

For your sleeping environment

This week I will: _____
(what)

_____ *(how much)* _____ *(when)* _____ *(how many)*

For your eating habit

This week I will: _____
(what)

_____ *(how much)* _____ *(when)* _____ *(how many)*

For your exercise habit

This week I will: _____
(what)

_____ *(how much)* _____ *(when)* _____ *(how many)*

For your relaxation habit

This week I will: _____
(what)

_____ *(how much)* _____ *(when)* _____ *(how many)*

How confident are you that you will accomplish your goal?

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|

0 = not at all confident

10 = totally confident

Your confidence level should be a 7 or higher.

Asking yourself this question shows how certain you are that you will succeed with your entire action plan. A confidence level of 7 or more will help you succeed. If your answer is not at least 7, think about adjusting your action plan.

When to call a physician

If sleep problems are happening regularly and last for weeks or even months, follow up with a visit to your physician. These types of sleep problems may be caused physical health issues.

Kaiser Permanente self-care resources

Which ones will you make part of your personal action plan?

- Visit kp.org/classes for programs that can help you manage mild insomnia with lifestyle changes to deal with quitting tobacco, stress and anxiety, mind-body health, or a chronic disease.
- Call 1-866-862-4295 to make a phone appointment with a wellness coach. Coaches can help you take action to quit tobacco, get physically active, manage your weight, eat healthy, or manage stress. Wellness coaching is available at no charge for Kaiser Permanente members.
- Check out the online resources at kp.org/healthylifestyles for personalized programs on insomnia, smoking cessation, nutrition, depression, chronic conditions, and stress relief.
- Listen to a gentle yet powerful guided imagery tool to help you sleep. Find the program at kp.org/listen.
- Read about more tips for managing mild insomnia at kp.org/health. (type "insomnia" into the search bar).

©2010 Kaiser Permanente. All rights reserved. Adapted from SCPMG Regional Health Education

The information presented here is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of professional medical care. If you have persistent medical problems, or if you have further questions, please consult your doctor or member of your health care team.