[Are You Dreaming of a Good Night's Sleep?](#)

Aging and Sleep

As we age, our sleep often becomes lighter and we may wake up often during the night. Some estimates suggest we wake up as much as 150 times in the course of a night's sleep just for a few seconds each time. However, it's essential to our health that we get some deep sleep each night.

Tips for Sleeping Better

If you're having trouble sleeping, try these tips toward a better night's sleep:

- Stay on the same schedule for going to bed and getting up each day.
- Try a relaxing routine each night before bedtime -- perhaps reading, a light snack, a warm bath.
- Avoid watching TV immediately before going to bed.
- Keep your bedroom as quiet and comfortable (right temperature, not too much light) as possible.
- If you can't fall asleep within about 20 to 30 minutes, don't worry about it! Just get up out of bed and relax a bit more in another room. Try again in a half hour or so.
- Exercise regularly, but not right before bedtime. A recent study by Stanford University found that older adults who took brisk walks or low-impact aerobics every couple of days fell asleep more quickly and were able to sleep longer.
- Avoid using alcohol, tobacco, and caffeine (including coffee, tea, cola, and even chocolate!) in the evening. You may find that cutting off caffeine as early as noon can make a significant difference.
- Don't sleep too much! Oversleeping can make you tired too.

If problems continue, talk to your physician. There are prescription and non-prescription medicines that may help, but many have side effects that must be considered and some can cause dependency. Your physician is best equipped to

determine the best options for you.