

Sleepless nights



Produced by Breast Cancer Network Australia (BCNA)

Based on BCNA's *Sleepless nights: breast cancer and sleep* fact sheet



Is it hard for you to sleep?

Maybe you cannot get to sleep or stay asleep. Maybe you are worried about your breast cancer or about what might happen next.

Many people find it hard to sleep when they have a lot on their minds. Some breast cancer treatments can also make sleeping hard. We have some ideas to help you sleep better.

Ideas to help you sleep better

Try to



- use yoga, meditation or tai chi to relax
- take 15 minutes to think about or write down everything that worries you before you go to bed



- eat plenty of fresh fruit, vegetables, wholegrain breads and cereals.

Try not to go to bed hungry or too full. For a light bedtime snack, try a glass of milk.



You can also



- drink lots of water



- keep paper and a pen next to your bed to write down what you think during the night



- exercise to make you tired



- only sleep in your bedroom and go to another room if you want to read, listen to music or watch TV
- make sure your bed and pillow are warm and comfortable and your room is dark and not too hot



- talk to your doctor before you take medicines that help you sleep.

Write a sleep diary

Write down



- what time you go to bed
- how long it takes you to go to sleep
- how often you wake up
- how tired you feel in the morning
- what you eat during the day
- how tired you feel during the day.

If you go to the doctor take your sleep diary with you. It will help the doctor understand so he or she can help you with your sleep.



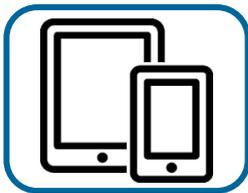
Doing these things can also improve your sleep



Drink less tea, coffee, energy drinks and soft drinks. They have caffeine in them. Do not drink caffeine after lunch.



Try not sleep during the day. If you have to sleep, sleep less than 30 minutes. Try not to nap after 3 o'clock in the afternoon.



Try not to use a smartphone, tablet, or computer in the 30 minutes before you go to sleep.



Try not to lie awake for more than 20 minutes. Get up and do something relaxing in another room. Do not worry about being awake. Just read a book or magazine, and try to sleep again in a little while.



Talk to your doctor if you have pain that keeps you awake.



Where to find more information



Breast Cancer Network Australia

For breast cancer information and support, call 1800 500 258 or visit bcna.org.au



Talk to your doctor



Cancer Council

For answers to questions about cancer, emotional support and relaxation call 13 11 20

Jean Hailes

For information about sleep and fatigue visit jeanhailes.org.au

National Cancer Institute

For a guide to sleeping for people affected by cancer visit cancer.gov

Macmillan Cancer Support

For a guide for people having trouble sleeping visit macmillan.org.uk