

Tip sheet: Take Steps to Improve Your Sleep

Tips for getting a good night's sleep with PTSD:

- Have another person or a pet in the house with you if possible
- Avoid violent TV shows, books, or the nightly news before bed
- Leave a light on
- Play a tape of nature sounds or soft music, or use a fan or white-noise machine
- Use relaxation techniques before bedtime
- If your trauma occurred inside your home, make your home environment look different
- Go to bed and wake up the same time each day if possible
- Develop a sleep routine to help train your body to know when it's time for sleep
- Don't lie in bed awake for more than 20 minutes. Get up and read, watch TV or listen to music until you feel sleepy.
- Exercise early in the day.
- Avoid caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol before bed.
- Create a sleep sanctuary. Your bedroom should be quiet, dark, and cool and should be used for sleep and sex only. Avoid working, eating, or watching TV in bed.
- Try to relax before bed. Take a warm bath or meditate.

If you continue to have trouble sleeping, talk to a health professional to rule out a physical problem.