

Sleep is essential for normal functioning of your body and brain. Getting a good night's sleep can be just as important to your physical well-being as getting enough food and exercise. Among a number of factors, having poor sleep and lack of rest can sometimes contribute to fatigue in people with hepatitis C. For information on how to manage fatigue download the **Hepatitis C: symptom management factsheet** on this site.

Here are some tips that may help you get a good night's sleep:

- establishing a regular sleep ritual is helpful for good sleep, try to go to bed at the same time each night and if you nap during the day keep it short and early in the day;
- keep your bedroom temperature cool, and don't have a television in the bedroom;
- light can also interfere with a good night sleep, so close the blinds before you go to bed;
- if you have a clock that is always lit up, turn it so you can't see the time;
- reduce caffeine intake and avoid it altogether four to six hours before bedtime;
- stop smoking or reduce nicotine intake during the four hours before bed, and don't have any at least 45 minutes before bed;
- consider a warm bath before bed to relax your body, adding a few drops of lavender oil may help relax your mind;
- avoid alcohol near bedtime;
- a heavy meal too close to bedtime interferes with sleep. If you eat something, choose food that is light and nutritious. Avoid spicy or greasy food;
- exercise relaxes muscles and aids sleep. But vigorous exercise just before bed may interfere with sleep;
- go to bed only when you are sleepy. Get out of bed if you can't fall asleep within 10–15 minutes and return when sleepy;
- a comfortable bed and supportive pillows will do wonders for your sleep;
- reduce stress as much as possible. If you toss and turn, get up. For example, try and write down all the things that are preoccupying your mind before you go to bed. You can then put them out of your mind until the next day; and
- learn relaxation techniques to reduce stress and worrying e.g. yoga techniques, listen to relaxation tapes before retiring.

For more information

For further information on hepatitis C please contact the national infoline 1300 HEP ABC (1300 437 222). The infoline diverts to information and support lines at your local state or territory hepatitis council.

Some of the information on hepatitis C above has been abridged from various resources, these resources include:

Fatigue & HCV factsheet (Hepatitis C Council of NSW)—Download PDF from www.hepatitisc.org.au/quickref/factsheet.html

Fatigue & Hepatitis C factsheet (Hepatitis Council of QLD)—Download PDF from www.hepatitisc.asn.au

HCV Management: Sleep (HCV Advocate)—Download PDF from www.hcvadvocate.org/hepatitis/factsheets_pdf/Sleep.pdf