

## SLEEP

If you have Parkinson's you need enough sleep to ensure that you are rested and have the energy needed to effectively manage your symptoms, and to obtain the maximum benefit from your medications. A refreshing sleep may even offer you 'sleep benefit', a period when you remain symptom free after waking.

Despite this need, you may find your sleep disturbed by a number of factors. For one, as you age, you may need less sleep at night. Difficulty turning over or the need to go to the bathroom may awaken you. As well, depression – a common condition among people with Parkinson's – may cause sleep difficulties. Here are a few suggestions to help you get a good night's rest:

- A **regular afternoon rest** of at least an hour, on the bed, will refresh you for the evening. A nap allows you to rest your muscles, relieving tension and aches.
- **Sleep on your side.** If your back or hips are sore, put a small soft pillow between your knees.
- If you can roll over without difficulty, **spend at least 20 minutes a day on your stomach** with your chin resting on your folded arms. This gives the spine an excellent stretch and relieves tension.
- **Avoid strenuous exercise**, hot baths or showers for two hours before bedtime.
- **Do not go to bed hungry.**
- **Use the bed for sleeping** rather than watching late night television or balancing bank statements.
- If you are disturbing your bed partner's sleep or vice versa, consider the occasional night in separate rooms. Alternatively, replace one large bed with two three-quarter or twin size beds with separate mattresses and covers.
- You may find it easier to be independent in bed if one side is up against a wall for you to push against.

If you continue to have difficulty sleeping, or if you are experiencing depression, do not hesitate to talk to your doctor about how you are feeling.

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Source: Pacific Parkinson's Research Centre, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC