What do you do if you've tried these tips, you still can't sleep, but you don't want to use medication? Sleep disturbance that lasts beyond 1-6 months may represent a symptom of a more severe physical or psychological problem or may place you at risk for depression so the first step would be to consult your primary care doctor or the nearest healthcare facility for a thorough medical evaluation. The next step may include behavioral therapy. Research shows that behavioral therapy is as effective as drug therapy in treating insomnia and may have longer term benefits.

For more information:
Heads Up Kentucky:
www.headsupkentucky.org
Sleep Foundation: www.sleepfoundation.org
American Psychological Association:
www.apa.org
(Search keywords: “insomnia” or “sleep hygiene”)

About the KPA Foundation
The Kentucky Psychological Association Foundation seeks to improve the lives of Kentuckians through public education about psychology, supports psychological research, and provides scholarship to students in psychology at higher education institutions across the Commonwealth. Donations to KPAF are tax-deductible. For more information about KPA and the KPA Foundation, visit the web at www.kpa.org

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Presented by
THE KENTUCKY PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION
Do you have trouble falling asleep, staying asleep, or with waking up too early? If so, you are not alone. Almost everyone has experienced some form of insomnia during their lifetime. More than 70 million Americans have occasional insomnia, and 10% of Americans suffer from severe insomnia. If you have trouble sleeping, you may benefit by taking a moment to read these helpful tips based on state-of-the-art scientific research in sleep medicine.

**Priority: Hours Needed**

The National Sleep Foundation recommends the following amount of sleep per day based on age groups:

* **Newborns (0-3 months)**: 14-17 hours
* **Infants (4-11 months)**: 12-15 hours
* **Toddlers (1-2 years)**: 11-14 hours
* **Preschoolers (3-5)**: 10-13 hours
* **School age children (6-13)**: 9-11 hours
* **Teenagers (14-17)**: 8-10 hours
* **Younger adults (18-25)**: 7-9 hours
* **Adults (26-64)**: 7-9 hours
* **Older adults (65+)**: 7-8 hours

**Sleep Environment:**
* **Be Aware of the 5 Senses**

Many things in your environment can impact your sleep pattern and circadian rhythm. Circadian rhythm is our biological clock that informs our bodies when wake up and when to go to sleep. So it is important make sure your environment is conductive to sleep. If you are struggling with sleep try some of the environmental suggestions for your bedroom below.

![Image of 5 colorful circles]

**See**

Artificial light after dark can send wake-up messages to the brain, suppressing the production of the sleep-inducing hormone melatonin and making it harder to fall asleep and stay asleep.

- Low-wattage, incandescent lamps
- Curtains or blinds
- Turn digital clocks away from bed
- Turn off all electronics with lights. Try to avoid using computers or TV's an hour before bed.
- Create a bedroom you find calm, relaxing, and de-cluttered.

**Hear**

Noise can jostle your slumber—causing you to wake, move, or shift between stages of sleep—so briefly that you don't remember the next morning.

- Create white noise using a fan or air purifier
- Ear plugs

**Touch**

Your body temperature rises and falls slightly during the day and is tied to your sleep cycle.

- Comfortable mattress and fresh sheets
- Cool room, around 65 degrees

**Smell**

There is some evidence that certain smells may have an effect on your sleep.

- Use calming scents like lavender (oils, candles, or sachets)
- Be aware of Allergies, use hot water to wash sheets once a week, air purifier, and vacuum regularly.

**Taste**

Foods containing the amino acid tryptophan might help with sleep.

- Avoid fatty, fried, or spicy food before bed.
- If you need a night time snack try nuts, eggs, whole wheat crackers with peanut butter, or whole wheat cereal.
- Avoid Alcohol before bed. Might make you drowsy and help you fall asleep, but it can actually make it harder to sleep deeply and continuously throughout the night
- No Caffeine 6 or more hours before bed. Caffeinated coffee can stay in your system 5-6 hours. Don't forget chocolate has caffeine too.

**Sleep Hygiene**

What is sleep hygiene?

**Conditions or practices that are vital for establishing and maintaining healthy sleep.**

To pave the way for better sleep, follow these simple yet effective healthy sleep tips:

- **Stick to a sleep schedule**, even on weekends by picking a set time to go to bed.
- **Practice a relaxing bedtime ritual**, Try drinking hot decaffeinated tea, taking a warm bath, or reading 1 hour before bed.
- **Exercise daily**. Try to included it earlier in the day. Rigorous exercise in the evenings can interfere with relaxation you need for a healthy nights sleep.