

## Participation

We value our patients and families participation in developing the services we provide, listening to what you have to say and taking the appropriate action as required.

If you wish to participate please visit the participation section within our website [www.accordhospice.org.uk](http://www.accordhospice.org.uk)

If you do not have access to the internet please request a leaflet.

## Suggestions, Comments & Complaints

If you have any suggestions, comments or complaints about how the service can be improved, please speak to a member of staff.

If you are not satisfied with the response, please discuss your concerns directly with the Chief Executive at ACCORD Hospice:

Jacki Smart  
0141 581 2000

Should you feel that your complaint has not been resolved by ACCORD Hospice, you may contact Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) directly, at any stage:

Edinburgh Office:  
Gyle Square  
1 South Gyle Crescent  
Edinburgh EH12 9EB  
0131 623 4300

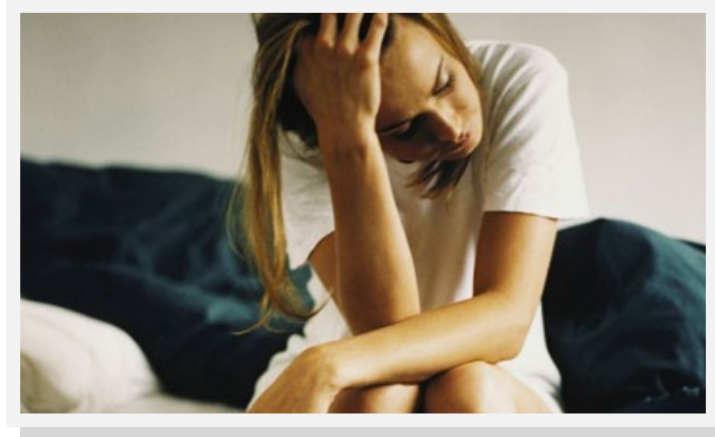
Glasgow Office:  
Delta House  
50 West Nile Street  
Glasgow G1 2NP  
0141 225 6999

Email: [hcis.complaints@nhs.net](mailto:hcis.complaints@nhs.net)

[www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org](http://www.healthcareimprovementscotland.org)

If required this leaflet is available in other languages  
& formats

# Sleeping Well



## Information for Patients



## How to cope with sleep problems

Losing a night's sleep every once in a while will not do you any harm, but persistent sleep deprivation can make other symptoms more difficult to cope with. Seven or eight hours sleep each night is usually sufficient; however, some people can survive quite happily with 5 hours sleep or less. We each know our bodies and how much sleep we need to be able to function well.

If you are not sleeping well, you may be feeling more tired than usual, struggling to concentrate or easily irritated perhaps?

We hope this leaflet will help you.

You may wish to keep a diary, keeping a record to establish your sleep pattern. This can help to identify possible causes that may affect your ability to sleep well.

- What time you go to bed at normally? When you normally get up?
- Are you worried? Do you have any particular fears?
- Think about the environment- is it too noisy, too hot, too cold, and consider lighting? Is your mattress comfortable?
- Do you try to relax and wind down before going to bed?
- Are you cat-napping / sleeping throughout the day?
- Are your physical symptoms worst at night?

## Possible triggers of sleep problems

Depression, anxiety and stress are common contributors of sleep problems, causing early waking or difficulty in getting to sleep in the first place. Pain and stiffness may contribute to your sleeping problem or you may experience breathlessness (particularly when lying down) or have a cough or wheeze which may also disturb your sleep.

Leg cramps may be a particular problem for you or you may experience night sweats. Or perhaps you waken frequently for the bathroom? Be aware too that certain medications such as steroids therapy may disturb sleep (particularly if taken too late in the day) and indeed some medications (a few antidepressants, beta blockers and heart medications) may also cause insomnia.

Age can also be a factor... unfortunately as we get older our sleeping pattern changes and as we age our bodies make less of the hormones which help us to sleep well.

## How can you improve your sleep?

Here are some tips which may help you.

- Go to bed at the same time every night. Avoid the temptation to have a long or cat nap through the day. Set your alarm for the usual time.
- Making sure your bedroom is at a comfortable temperature – i.e. Not too hot or cold . Keep the room as dark as you can. Consider taking a bath before bed; or having a warm drink to help you unwind.
- Try not to watch TV or use the computer before bed. Instead, listen to quiet music to promote relaxation. Relaxation exercises/meditation can help.
- If noise is a problem, then try using earplugs
- If you are taking steroid therapy seek advice from your Doctor, and **if you have any concerns regarding your other medication, consult your GP.**
- You may wish to try a few drops of lavender on your pillow to promote a restful sleep.
- Avoid stimulants such as tea/ coffee/ cola/ alcohol - try herbal teas or "horlicks" instead.
- People who exercise are inclined to have a better quality of sleep. Going for an early evening walk can help. Avoid exercise too late in the day though, as this can have a stimulating effect.
- Deal with worries or a demanding tasks by making a list for the next day. If you find yourself lying in bed worrying about tomorrow; set time aside before bed to review the day and to make plans for the next day.
- Never go to bed on an argument, always clear the air! It makes it impossible for you to relax and fall asleep.
- If you feel you have tried everything – you may wish to seek advice from your GP. He may arrange a blood test; or prescribe medication for symptoms or prescribe a sleeping tablet if appropriate.

Finally, the emphasis should be on "quality" of sleep, not quantity. Worrying about lack of sleep can make your problem worse. Simple lifestyle changes can make a difference but remember to seek advice if your problem persists and don't suffer unnecessarily.

