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Helpful Tips for Falling Asleep

Many people, especially during the early phase of bereavement, have problems sleeping well. This can be heightened by the changing seasons and daylight savings time. Getting enough sleep is an essential part of the self-care needed to make sure you have the energy (both physical and mental) for grief-processing. Consider these tips to help you get a restful night's sleep:

1. Challenge yourself to set a consistent sleep schedule—plan to wake each day at the same time and go to bed at the same time each night. Consistency will help to regulate your circadian rhythm.
2. Try to make sure that the last hour before going to bed is peaceful – listen to soothing music, read a light book, or engage in needlework such as knitting or crocheting.
3. Drink a cup of warm milk or try a cup of chamomile tea.
4. Breathe – practice some relaxation exercises or listen to meditative tapes.
5. Cut out big meals, alcohol, nicotine and caffeine at least 3 to 4 hours prior to bedtime.
6. Do not exercise before bedtime; it acts as a stimulant and may keep you awake.
7. Take a bath – light some candles and pour bubbles or bath salts in the tub.
8. Spray some light lavender scent on your pillow.
9. Say good night to your worries – write them down and put them in a book. Then close the book and put it in a drawer.
10. The bedroom is for sleeping... do not eat, watch TV, or use the computer in bed.

***From the staff at Supporting Kidds
The Center for Grieving Children and Their Families***