



Patient Education Sheet

Tips on Sleep for Sjögren's Patients

Clinicians: Please make as many copies of this Patient Education Sheet as you want and distribute to your patients. If you have an idea for a topic or want to author a Patient Education Sheet, please contact us at sq@sjogrens.org.

The SSF thanks H. Kenneth Fisher, MD, FACP, FCCP, Internal Medicine, Pulmonary Diseases, Sleep Disorders, Beverly Hills, California, for "Tips on Sleep for Sjögren's Patients." Dr. Fisher reminds patients that adequate sleep is especially important for those with Sjögren's syndrome, saying that sleep deprivation exacerbates daytime fatigue and can affect the immune system.

- ▶ Make sure the bedroom is comfortable, secure, dark, and quiet.
- ▶ Try to maintain good "sleep hygiene:" Get out of bed at the same time nearly every morning (including weekends) and into bed with lights out at roughly the same time at night.
- ▶ Use the bedroom for sleep and sex: no TV, no "homework," no arguments, no clock-watching.
- ▶ Plan for about 8.5 hours of sleep per night or longer if you wake up a lot.
- ▶ Prepare for sleep by using moisturizing gel or vitamin E oil to coat the mouth at bedtime. Consult the SSF Product Directory for suggestions.
- ▶ Use a moisturizing spray or gel for your dry nose.
- ▶ Use a humidifier at night. Keep the temperature on the cool side to minimize moisture evaporation from the mouth or nose.
- ▶ For GERD (gastro-esophageal reflux disease), follow anti-reflux precautions. Avoid eating at least 3 hours before bed and limit liquids to small sips to keep the stomach empty. Elevate the head of your bed at least 30-45° by raising the bed posts; do not use extra pillows for this.
- ▶ Avoid alcohol or caffeine after 4 p.m.
- ▶ If you are a worrywart at bedtime, make a short list of your major troubles, and write down how you plan to deal with them the next day.
- ▶ For more helpful hints, order *The Woman's Book of Sleep: A Complete Resource Guide* by Amy Wolfson from the SSF Store on the Foundation Web site. *No More Sleepless Nights* by Peter Hauri and Shirley Linde provides another source with tips for better sleep.

For more information on Sjögren's syndrome, visit the SSF Web site at www.sjogrens.org, call 1-800-475-6473, e-mail ssf@sjogrens.org or write to the Sjögren's Syndrome Foundation, 6707 Democracy Blvd, Suite 325, Bethesda, MD 20817.