



## THE SCIENCE

Studies show that sleep can significantly impact our daily thinking and memory, and that we can take charge to get the rest we need to stay sharp and focused.

## NOW DO IT!

Take a look at the *Tips for Getting a Better Night's Sleep* worksheet. Which tips do you use now? Which tips would you like to try?

Next, try some relaxation strategies that can help us sleep better. As you practice, think about what you might continue to use on your own.

## TRIANGLE DE-STRESS STRATEGY

Our “stress triangle” - forehead, scalp and upper back - is where we tend to “hold” tension. These stretches can help relax our stress triangle, making it easier for us to fall and stay asleep.

- **Neck Rolls** With shoulders down, lean your right ear toward your right shoulder. Then carefully and slowly roll your chin onto your chest and over to your left shoulder. Repeat 2x.
- **Shoulder Shrugs** “Draw” circles with your shoulders, alternating sides.
- **“Pick” Fruit** Reach up as if picking fruit off a tall tree, one arm at a time. Repeat several times.

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## **TENNIS BALL MASSAGE STRATEGY**

We can use common items, like a tennis ball, to help relieve muscle tension and promote relaxation. Try some simple massage techniques using a tennis ball or similar small ball. Or, use your fingers for self-massage.

- Massage your hands, arms and shoulders, using very gentle pressure as you move the ball up and down or in a circular motion with their opposite hand. Repeat on both sides.
- Use the balls to massage the tops of your legs, using very gentle pressure as you move the ball up and down or in a circular motion with your hand. Repeat on both sides.
- Place the balls on the floor, directly under your right foot, then roll the ball back and forth with gentle pressure, massaging the bottom of your foot. After a few minutes, repeat on the left foot.

## **SLEEP SCENTS STRATEGY**

Aromatherapy uses scents to change our mood and well-being. Lavender has been shown in studies to promote relaxation and is often used as a sleep aid.

- Place a few drops of lavender essential oil on individual cotton pads.
- Smell the lavender oil for a few moments and think about how the lavender oil makes you feel. What memories does it bring up?

**TBH TAKEAWAY**

Getting a good night's sleep matters to our brain fitness. To get a better night's rest, try some of the relaxation strategies here.