

Ask The Experts

No Time For Sleep?

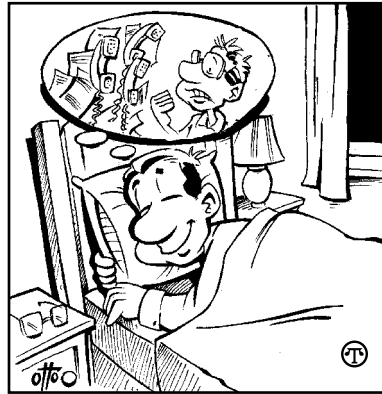
(NAPSA)—Dear Dr. Roth,
My job requires much travel, and even when I am home, my days are jam-packed. On top of chauffeuring my children around town and caring for my elderly in-laws, I struggle to maintain my household. My schedule varies from one day to the next, but one thing is always the same—I never have any time to relax, much less sleep. Even if I do manage to get to bed early, I lie awake, unable to sleep, haunted by my “to do” list for the next day. The sleep medications I have tried make me feel groggy and sluggish when I wake up. What do you recommend?

Sincerely,
Sleepless in New York
Thomas Roth, Ph.D., the director of research and division head of the Sleep Disorders and Research Center at Henry Ford Health System in Detroit, responds:

Dear Sleepless,
Rest assured, you are not alone. In fact, a recent national survey found that of Americans surveyed, nearly one half said they have trouble sleeping at least one night a week. Many people lead a 24/7 life like yours, juggling careers, hobbies, family, and friends—at the expense of sleep. With so many activities competing for your time, you may feel that sleep gets pushed to the back burner.

Fortunately, you have not exhausted all of your options for getting a good night's sleep. Here are several ways to help you get the restful sleep you need:

- Before going to bed, make a list of your worries or the activities you have to do the next day.



- Take a hot bath before bed. Your body temperature will drop after you leave the tub, signaling your body that it is time to sleep.

- Do not watch the clock or dwell on your sleeplessness.

- If you cannot fall asleep within 15 minutes, get out of bed and do something relaxing (such as read, listen to music) and return to bed only when you are sleepy.

- Wear an eye mask to keep out the light.

- Fill your room with soft white noise, such as that of a fan.

If you still have difficulty sleeping, you may want to ask your doctor about a sleep medication such as Sonata® (zaleplon) C-IV. Like other sleep aids, you can take Sonata at bedtime. But Sonata is the first and only prescription sleep aid that you can take later, after trying to fall asleep on your own, given you have at least four hours in bed before you become active again. Sonata allows you to fall asleep fast and still wake up naturally, ready to start your day.

Note to Editors: Sonata is not for everyone; you should talk to your doctor to see if Sonata is right for you. Sonata is for people who simply have trouble falling asleep. It is not for premature awakenings. Until you know how you will react to prescription sleep aids including Sonata, you should not drive or operate machinery. In clinical studies, common side effects were headache, dizziness, and sleepiness. People should not drink alcohol while taking Sonata. People who abuse prescription sleep aids may become dependent. Prescription sleep aids are often taken for seven to 10 days as needed. A doctor will advise about taking them longer.