
Sleep Shouldn't Be Scary – Tips to Reduce Nightmares



Nightmares often interfere with people's ability to fall and stay asleep. If you deal with intense dreams or nightmares, here are some options to help:



- Before going to sleep, remind yourself that you are in a safe place
 - ✓ Look at pictures that remind you of where you are or of your favorite place
 - ✓ Say something positive to yourself before bed (e.g., "I'm safe here," "I will be okay," "Even though I'm scared, I am strong," etc.),
 - ✓ Make your bed as comfortable and safe-feeling as possible, etc.

- It's not uncommon for people to wake up from a nightmare feeling like they're reliving a past event
 - ✓ Have key visual reminders around your bed in case you wake up from a nightmare and feel disoriented that can help you reorient yourself to the present place and time.
 - ✓ Having a visual reminder (a recent photo of yourself, a reassuring phrase, a calendar) that you can easily see when you wake up can help reorient you to the moment and help your mind remember that you are somewhere safe.
 - ✓ If you usually wear glasses or contacts, be sure you have something large enough for you to see easily, or keep glasses next to your bed.

- Write down your dreams first thing in the morning so they're not just lingering in your mind all day.
 - ✓ Talk with a friend, therapist, or other trusted person about nightmares so you're not alone in this experience.

- Research has shown that by reviewing the dream and adding a favorable ending you can end recurring nightmares

- Make your bed as much of an oasis as possible.
 - ✓ Use comfortable sheets and blankets
 - ✓ Put a couple drops of essential oils or perfume on your sheets
 - ✓ Display images around your bed that make you feel calm or happy
 - ✓ Try a weighted blanket, etc.

