

## Sleep Longer Protocol

Teri Elliott-Burke, PT, MHS, BCB-PMD

As your body ages, your veins may become less efficient at pumping fluid from your arms and legs to your heart when you are upright during the day. At night when you lie down and remove the effects of gravity, your veins are better able to pump the fluid into your system where it is converted into urine. Therefore, you will fill your bladder more frequently during the night. Medications, such as diuretics and prostate problems can also cause frequent urination during the night.

For a better chance at getting up less frequently to urinate through the night, try the following:

- Take medications known to be diuretics or water pills, as early in the day as permitted by your physician.
- Limit fluid intake after 6pm.
- Two hours before bed, lie down with your legs elevated above your heart (supported by pillows). While in this position:
  - Make circles with your ankles, 20 times in each direction.
  - Pump your ankles up and down 20 times.
  - Straighten your knees one at a time by lifting each foot up toward the ceiling and then back down to the pillow. Repeat 10 times with each leg.

If you continue to have frequent urination at night, consult your physician and ask about seeing a **WPTI** physical therapist to further address your urgency/frequency issues.