FIVE TIPS TO HELP PREVENT NIGHTMARES

Although it is normal to have a nightmare once in a while, there are some techniques you can try to get nightmares under control.

Have fun in the dark
Make being in the dark fun. Have a treasure hunt and search for things that glow in the dark.

Use your imagination and be creative
Use your imagination to fight imaginary fears, like monsters. Make a “monster spray” from a clean fine spray bottle filled with water. Whenever possible, have your child be actively involved in coming up with solutions to help him gain a sense of mastery and control.

Nightlight
No matter what your child seems to be afraid of, a night-light can help. Nightlights are fine as long as it does not prevent your child from falling asleep. Another thing to try is leaving the bedroom door open so that your child doesn’t feel isolated from the rest of the family.

Avoid scary television shows
Keep your child away from scary TV shows, videos or stories that may add to his fears.

Relaxation training
Teach your child relaxation strategies to help him relax at bedtime and fall asleep. For example, have your child imagine a relaxing scene, such as lying on the beach or watching a sunset. This will give him something else to think about while lying in bed and help distract him from his fearful thoughts. Also, it is physically impossible to be relaxed and scared at the same time.

What if the Nightmares Don’t Go Away?
Allowing your child to Just talk about what happened in their nightmare can help. If something has been troubling your child during the day, discussing those feelings may help too.
Some children can “rewrite” or re tell their nightmares by giving them happier endings. Another trick could be to draw a picture of the bad dream and then rip it up!