



# BETTER SLEEP GUIDE TO



## What actually is SLEEP?

Sleep is often seen as a time when we our bodies are inactive. In fact the opposite is true.

When we sleep our bodies go through complex processes.

During sleep our muscles relax, and our bodies build and repair.

## Sleep is primarily for the brain.



It allows the brain to recover and turns information into memory.

Without a good night's sleep your brain finds it difficult to do this.

Think of sleep like pressing the save button on your computer.

While you sleep your brain is not only saving memories it is strengthening them, reorganising them, picking out emotional details and helping us to develop insight and creative ideas.

## Sleep is AMAZING!

Getting a good nights sleeps helps to:

Improve mood and feelings of wellness

Organise and strengthens memories

Improve immune system

Helps muscles

Build, grow

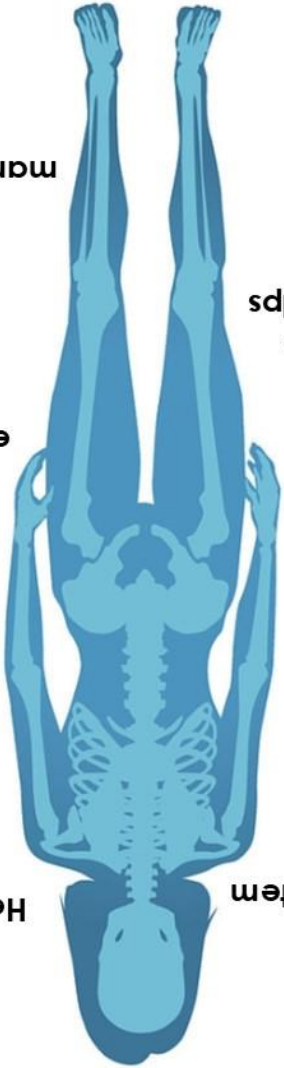
and repair

Improve posture

Improve the skin and helps you to look healthy

Increase energy levels

Helps to manage weight



Without sleep we: can't concentrate, remember, have poorer mental health, get sick more often and are more likely to have accidents.

# Why can't I sleep?



**There's loads of reasons why you might be struggling to sleep:**

- **Stress and Anxiety**
- **Using your phone/ tablet in bed**
- **Drinks containing caffeine**
- **Room not dark enough**
- **Worrying and overthinking**
- **Playing on a console just before bed**
- **Not having a routine**

We all have times in our lives when we struggle to sleep. Having good sleep hygiene and a regular sleep routine will help.

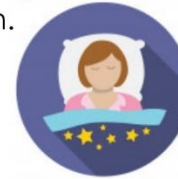
**Use these 6 steps to help you off to a great nights sleep**

## **STEP 1: Wind down**

Winding down is really important for helping your mind and body prepare for a good nights sleep.

Stop working, playing etc 30 mins to an hour before bed to allow you mind to begin to relax. you can: take a bath or shower, read a book or magazine, listen to some calming music.

It's important to try not to do things that will cause your mind to power up again.



## **STEP 2: Exercise**

Exercise doesn't have to be hours in a gym or running for hours on end. 20-30 minutes exercise per day has shown to increase sleep time by over 40 minutes and reduce the time it takes to fall asleep by 12 minutes.

Exercise is also possibly the best way to improve your mood. So if your feeling low exercise can dramatically improve how you are feeling, increase your energy levels etc.

## **STEP 3: Write your thoughts down**

We have all been there you prepare well for be you turn the light off and your brain goes into overdrive, running through thoughts and worries.

Keep some paper and a pen next to you bed. If you find your mind is racing write or draw it on the paper so you don't forget it helps to make worries and problems smaller too.

## **STEP 4: Admit you need sleep**

As much as you really want to watch the next episode of something on Netflix or finish the stage on a game its really important to listen to your body and accept you need to sleep. Getting a good nights sleep will help your brain sort the information of the day, repair and recover your body and you will feel better the next day.

Those distractions will still be there tomorrow and you'll most likely be able to do them better with a refreshed brain.

## **STEP 5: Turn off Technology**

You will be tired and when your tired your brain doesn't function properly you'll be likely drawn into posting something you may regret the next day.

The light from your device impacts on the brains ability to recognise signs for sleep keeping you alert and awake.

Blue light effects the melatonin production in the brain and can mess with hormones

Low melatonin levels are linked to increased likelihood of developing depression.

## **STEP 6: Darken your room**

You sleep better in the dark. If your eyelids flutter open as you move from one stage of sleep to another, even streetlights or a full moon can wake you up.

You can also get rid of the clock radios with lighted displays. It turns out your brain can misinterpret even such dim lights and wonder if it should wake you up.