

Top Tips for Good Sleep



We all need a good amount of sleep. See over the page for how much sleep we need at different ages. Getting enough sleep is important for

- Concentration
- Memory
- Learning
- Performance at school or work
- Emotional well-being
- Physical well-being
- Maintaining a healthy body weight

1. Do regular exercise

This helps your body sleep better.

2. Cut out caffeine after about 3-4pm

Caffeine (found in cola/chocolate/tea/coffee/some energy drinks) is a stimulant that can stay in the body for up to 6 hours and prevents the body from relaxing.

3. Talk with someone you trust about things that are worrying you

Try to find ways forward by talking with the right people to help deal with stress or anxiety, to help you get to sleep and stay asleep more easily.

4. Don't eat late

Eating too much or too little close to bedtime can prevent sleep, due to an overfull or empty stomach.

5. Have a sleep-friendly bedroom

Have your bedroom dark, quiet and comfortable at night. Blackout blinds can help insulate against the light from nearby streetlights or early summer mornings/late evenings.

6. A screen-free hour before bed

Light from screens increases alertness and reduces melatonin (the sleepy-making hormone). You will go to sleep more quickly and sleep more deeply if you don't use mobiles/tablets/computers/TVs etc before bedtime. Also, keeping your bedroom free of electronic devices can help boost sleep.

7. Have a winding-down routine

These things can help:

- A warm bath (not hot) will help your body reach a temperature that's ideal for rest.
- Writing 'to do' lists for the next day to organise your thoughts and clear your mind of any distractions.
- Relaxation exercises (e.g. light stretches) to help to relax the muscles. Don't exercise vigorously as it will have the opposite effect.
- Use relaxation CDs.
- Read a book or listen to the radio to relax the mind by distracting it.

8. Have a regular sleep routine

Go to bed and get up at the same time each day, even at the weekend. You will 'train' your body to know when to sleep and when to get up. Don't have 'cat naps' in the day, and avoid getting up in the night. Even if you are awake in bed, remind yourself to relax as your body is resting even if it is not sleeping. Don't look at the clock or you might worry about the time and how long you are awake – worrying about not sleeping is a key cause of not sleeping! Re-setting your body's "circadian rhythms" or sleeping patterns like this can take some people a few days or weeks, so try to persevere 😊

For more information, see e.g. www.nhs.uk/Livewell/sleep/Pages/sleep-home.aspx

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Source: <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/Childrenssleep/Pages/howmuchsleep.aspx>

There's no set amount of sleep that all children of a particular age need, but here's a guide to the approximate hours of sleep they should aim for. Adults need about 8 hours sleep.

These are hours of sleep based on age, as recommended by the Millpond Children's Sleep Clinic:

Age	Day time sleep needed	Night time sleep needed
1 week	8 hours	8 hours, 30 minutes
4 weeks	6 to 7 hours	8 to 9 hours
3 months	4 to 5 hours	10 to 11 hours
6 months	3 hours	11 hours
9 months	2 hours, 30 minutes	11 hours
12 months	2 hours, 30 minutes	11 hours
2 years	1 hour, 30 minutes	11 hours, 30 minutes
3 years	0 to 45 minutes	11 hours, 30 minutes to 12 hours
4 years		11 hours, 30 minutes
5 years		11 hours
6 years		10 hours, 45 minutes
7 years		10 hours, 30 minutes
8 years		10 hours, 15 minutes
9 years		10 hours
10 years		9 hours, 45 minutes
11 years		9 hours, 30 minutes
12 years		9 hours, 15 minutes
13 years		9 hours, 15 minutes
14 years		9 hours
15 years		9 hours
16 years		9 hours