7 Top Tips

FOR A GOODNIGHTS SLEEP

1. Have a routine

2. Find ways to relax and wind down

3. Reduce screen time before bed

4. Make your bedroom relaxing

5. Get Up and move around

6. Avoid long naps

7. Be Aware

Phase
PROMOTE | PREVENT | SUPPORT

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Why is sleep important?

Sleep is vital for our wellbeing - it is like food for our brain, so it is essential that we make it a priority. Sleep helps us with alertness, increased immunity, and boosts our mood and energy. However, during this time of lockdown, sleep has been impacted. The National Sleep Survey found that **75% of people are finding their sleep to be affected during this time.** Sleep helps us get ready for the next day. Below are 7 top tips on how to help you try and get a good night's sleep.

1. Have a routine

The body craves consistency and having a regular bedtime and wake up time can improve sleep. Incorporating activities such as exercise and exposure to daylight into your daytime routine can also improve sleep at night.

2. Find ways to relax and wind down

You should spend at least 30 minutes winding down before bed. Activities which can help us relax include having a bath, breathing exercises, journaling, reading, and listening to music. **Do what you find relaxing** - remember it's about what works for you. Build these activities into a wind down routine, and try starting it at the same time every night.

3. Reduce screen time before bed

Reduce the amount time on your screen before bedtime. Research suggests winding down your screen time usage 2 hours before bedtime, but at a minimum, at least 30 minutes. Instead of scrolling on social media before bed, why not try some of the other ways from **tip 2** to wind down. If possible, don't have your phone in your bedroom at night. If you use it as your alarm clock why not buy a cheap alarm clock instead, or put your phone on the other-side of the room!

4. Make your bedroom relaxing

Make sure that your bedroom is a relaxing environment and one which will help you sleep. It should be dark and as quiet as possible. Having fresh air helps with sleep, with the best air temperature being around 16-18c. Try not to spend all day in your bedroom or on your bed so that your brain can associate your room with sleep.

5. Get Up and move around

Although it might feel counter intuitive, if you can't sleep, get up and move around. Do something relaxing until you feel tired again, and then go back to bed. If you still can't sleep, remember that rest is just as important.

6. Avoid long naps

A short nap (20-30 minutes) can help with short term alertness and prevents you from falling into a deep sleep. However, naps longer than this, or taken too late in the day, can impact upon your sleep quality at night.

7. Be aware

Be aware of the food and drink that you are consuming just before bed, especially those that are high in sugar (energy drinks, cola) or caffeine (coffee, tea). Caffeine can stay in the blood stream for around 6-8 hours. Try not to eat too much food late at night - it is recommended to eat a minimum of 3 hours before going to sleep.