

# Sleep

Most of us need anywhere between 7 and 9 hours of sleep each night to feel rested and recharged for the next day. When we're busy or stressed, our sleep patterns can change and the amount of sleep we get each night is negatively impacted.



## Why is sleep important?

Research suggests that:

- Better sleep is linked with higher levels of concentration and performance, and higher levels of wellbeing
- Poor sleep has been associated with various symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress
- Sleep is important for memory consolidation. That is, the transformation of recent memories into long-term memories

## Tips to improve the quality of your sleep

Here are 10 ways to help get a good night's sleep:

- Avoid using technology 1-2 hours before you plan to go to sleep – the blue light emitting from the screen can heighten your alertness
- Don't lie in bed unless you are sleepy – this way your brain will form a strong link between your bed and sleep
- Enhance your sleep hygiene by making sure your sleep environment/bedroom is dark, comfortable, quiet, and cool (about 17-19°C)
- Consuming alcohol before going to sleep is linked to night sweats, headaches, and an increased number of awakenings – try not to consume alcohol at least four hours before you plan to sleep
- Avoid binge drinking – your melatonin levels (what makes us feel sleepy at night) can be impacted for up to a week
- Have a set routine where you wake up and go to sleep at the same times everyday to help create a regular sleep pattern
- To help destress and unwind from the day, practice a relaxation technique (such as meditation or mindfulness) for a few minutes each night before bed
- Exercise can help improve your sleep – but avoid exercising in the hours just before bed
- Avoid watching TV in bed before going to sleep – it can stimulate your brain and make it harder for you to fall asleep
- Avoid taking naps during the day that last for over 30 minutes