

Is technology disrupting your sleep?



"Sleep is the golden chain that ties health and our bodies together."

Thomas Dekker

With the accessibility of technology on the rise and both our reliance and our obsession with it growing rapidly, it's no surprise that our screen time is increasing.

Given the benefits technology brings to our fast-paced lives, many of us are spending a considerable amount of time every day on a screen, whether it's for work, learning, socialisation, or entertainment. For some, our devices may also contribute to the way we earn our income.

While we often think of minimising time on a smart phone, the same principles apply to tablets, laptops, and television. Large amounts of screen time can however have a negative impact on the quality and quantity of our sleep as well as on our overall health.



On average, we spend **5.5 hours** on phones and smart devices each day excluding time spent working

[Reference](#)



Only 15% of those aged 5-12 years fall within the recommended screen time guidelines

[Reference](#)



The average person will tap, swipe or click their phone more than **2,000 times** a day.

[Reference](#)

“Remember that in order to be productive you also have to focus on relaxation.”

Bogdan Ivanov



How can technology impact your sleep?

Generally, light keeps us alert, whereas darkness generates melatonin to help us rest. Overexposure can make it more difficult not just to fall asleep, but also to remain asleep.

As our screen time use has increased, so has our exposure to the blue light emitted from devices, which is the strongest light for suppressing melatonin . As melatonin is the hormone responsible for making us feel drowsy, by supressing it we can risk reducing our overall sleep time and quality .







While this is a problem for adults, the effects of technology use at night are even greater with children and teens.

We all know that getting enough good quality sleep is important for our health and wellbeing. Sleep can impact our mental and physical wellbeing, from improved decision making, to reduced risk of chronic illnesses like kidney disease and diabetes.

So, reducing screen time, especially towards the end of the day, is imperative to building healthy habits and improving sleep quality. While technology will continue to play an important role in our lives, give your health a helping hand by getting a great night's sleep!

Tips to get a good night's sleep

Technology and screen time is increasingly necessary for work, learning, socialising, and keeping up with current affairs. So, how can you manage your screen time to make sure you get a good night's sleep?

	<p>Say goodnight to your screens Aim to stop screen time at least one hour before you go to bed. Try some wind-down activities you can do before bed that don't involve screens such as reading a book, meditating, or taking a bath.</p>		<p>Set time limits for apps We spend a lot of time switching between various apps throughout the day and it can all add up. Set time limits on your most used apps in your device settings – this will remind you when you are reaching your daily limit and help you reduce your screen time.</p>
	<p>Time and place Keep devices out of your bedroom if you can. Keeping your sleeping space device free not only avoids temptation but sends a signal that this is a place for sleep and rest.</p>		<p>Don't sleep with your smart devices next to your bed It's easy to unconsciously pick up our smart devices when they are in reach. Try keeping your phone away from your bed so it's not the last thing you use at night, or the first thing you reach for in the morning. Invest in a low cost alarm if you rely on your phone to wake you up.</p>
	<p>Turn on night-time features Most devices come equipped with a night-time feature that will reduce the number of notifications you receive and minimise blue light by filtering the screen to warmer colours. Take a look at the settings on your smart device to reduce your screen time at night.</p>		<p>Use technology to your advantage While excessive screen time can impact sleep time and quality, technology can also help you understand your overall sleep health. Health tracking apps synced with wearable devices can help you understand your sleep cycles, while others can help with guided meditation to help you relax.</p>

Know when to reach out

Some things we can manage on our own, but there are some things we can't. Knowing the difference is another important skill.

If you do need someone to talk to, contact our mental health and wellbeing services, we are here to help.