



# *Sleep smarter,* live better.

Why looking after your sleep, is essential to looking after yourself.

Along with a good diet and regular exercise, sleep is the foundation for feeling and living better.

And while you might need discipline to watch what you eat, or motivation for exercise, all you have to do to sleep well is get to bed on time and sleep for around eight hours.

We all know it's not as easy as it sounds. Life gets busy and stressful. Getting to bed late, waking up early and having a sleep that's anything but restful becomes the norm.

In fact, around two-thirds of people say they don't get the recommended seven or more hours of sleep a night. Which is surprising when you consider how great you feel after a good night's sleep. And for good reason.

Sleep is when our bodies recover and can physically repair themselves. It's good for your health and helps you feel calm and energised for the day ahead.

There's not a lot that good sleep can't help with. It can influence your mood, memory, concentration, energy levels, decision-making and how well you cope with everyday challenges. Getting enough sleep also supports your immune system, helps regulate appetite, and can make it easier to stay active and eat well.

## **How to build a healthy sleep routine**

Most of us need around seven to nine hours of sleep each night, but just as important as the number of hours is the quality and consistency of that sleep.

And as we understand more about the importance of good sleep to our general wellbeing, we are learning more about how healthy sleep habits can improve the quality and consistency of our sleep.

It starts with setting and sticking to a regular bedtime and creating your own routine that helps you get to sleep and sleep well.

## Good sleep hygiene

If the key to living well is sleeping well, then you're in luck. You can improve your sleep by creating a bedtime routine and adopting some good habits.

**Keep a regular sleep pattern.** Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day to help regulate your body clock.

**Turn the lights down.** Lower evening light levels to support melatonin production and prepare your brain for sleep.

**Stop the after-dinner snacks.** Late eating raises body temperature and can delay sleep. Aim to stop eating around three hours before bed.

**Put the cuppa down.** Avoid evening coffee or tea. Caffeine sensitivity increases with age, and alcohol can disrupt sleep quality.

**Take a bath.** A short, warm bath can help you unwind—just allow time to cool down before bed.

**Make a to-do list.** Write down tomorrow's tasks to ease racing thoughts at night.

**Switch off the screens.** TVs and phones stimulate the brain and delay sleep—try switching off earlier.

**Turn on the music.** Gentle, slow music can help you relax and fall asleep more easily.

**Make your room a sleep space.** Keep it dark, cool and quiet. Charge phones elsewhere and make your bed as comfortable as possible.

**In short, when you sleep better, you feel better and that, ultimately, helps you live better. Remember: the aim is seven to eight hours solid slumber. If you can get that, you should feel healthier and happier.**

## Something on your mind?

If you require counselling, coaching or support, our clinicians are here to help. Call, chat or request an appointment online.

## Looking for more resources?



Register for [Wellbeing Gateway](#). Your mental health and wellbeing companion.

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