



# Sleep Hygiene

“Only 8% of people wake up feeling refreshed and 60% admit to not being happy with the amount of sleep they get.” (Chris Worsfold)

## So Why Is Sleep Important?

- The ‘World Health Organisation’ recommends adults should have 7-8 hours per night allowing us to go through 5-6 cycles of deeper and lighter sleep providing optimal recovery.
- Good regular sleep makes you feel happier as it regulates your mood by decreasing levels of our stress hormone - cortisol. Sleep deprivation makes you more sensitive to pain therefore good regular sleep can help in reducing pain symptoms.

## Other Benefits...

- Your brain recharges - improving our memory as we know sleep deprivation results in accidents due to drowsiness and poor concentration.
- Your cells repair themselves at a higher rate - specifically myelin cells which protect our nerves.
- Your body releases important hormones - particularly leptin which suppresses appetite helping maintain proper body weight. This is why cravings for high-calorie and fatty foods surge by 45% when your sleep deprived (sleep.org).
- Sleep maintains your immune system, people who sleep less than 7 hours a night are 3x more likely to develop a cold.
- During sleep your body’s temperature reduces by 1 degree this is why room temperature is important and also why a bath prior to sleep helps as it dilates our circulatory system allowing heat loss.

## Top Tips

1. Have a designated place to sleep
2. Optimise your sleeping environment with

a suggested temperature of around 18 degrees and that the room is quiet and dark (consider earplugs / eye masks)

3. Establish a routine with a regular set-time for sleep as this helps to develop a regular sleep wake cycle and rhythm - programming your body to sleep better
4. Reduce your daily intake of stimulants such as alcohol, caffeine (tea & coffee) prior to sleep and also from noon onwards - these prevent a deep sleep
5. Avoid over-hydrating as this can interrupt sleep
6. Reduce or try to give up smoking - as this disrupts sleep
7. High levels of protein can promote sleep, however high levels of fat can reduce sleep. If consuming carbohydrates allow time for digestion, more than 1 hour prior to sleep
8. Restrict stimulating activities such as ‘screen time’ exposure (phones, laptops, T.V’s) and dim room lights prior to sleep - have some ‘off-line time’ 2 hours prior to bed
9. Engage in relaxing activities prior to sleep - yoga, 7/11 breathing, meditation
10. Engage in regular daily exercises however try to avoid strenuous exercise 3 hours prior to sleep
11. If you find you are waking, avoid stimulating activities as this only rewards the brain for waking you. If you are waking due to worrying - try writing a list.