

## Good sleep hygiene – for better sleep

There are many circumstances that can lead to poor sleep including ill health, pain and discomfort, breathing difficulties, sleep apnoea, menopausal symptoms, shift work, anxiety and depression, stress & worry, a new born baby, sick children, prescribed medications, restless leg syndrome, caffeine including coffee tea & alcohol, neurological disorders, age, hyperthyroidism, genetics, jetlag, and more.

Poor sleep can lead to and create all sorts of difficulties and daily life problems including physical and mental health issues, poor concentration, work performance, relationships & family life; and financial implications.

Tips to better sleep –

Invest in a better mattress for comfort

Keep a sleep journal to monitor your sleep pattern

Minimise noise to create a quieter environment

Fit blackout blinds to prevent light interference

Avoids VDU's before going to bed to prevent brain over stimulation

Avoid eating a large or heavy meal before bedtime/excessive alcohol

Ensure the environment is at the right temperature

Keep daytime naps to a maximum of 20 mins

Exercise 20 minutes during the day such as going for a walk in nature

Awaken at the same time each day to establish a routine

Our brains need serotonin in order to produce melatonin to induce sleep. The production of natural melatonin can be inhibited by the use of visual display units such as bright light, televisions, computers, tablets & Ipads, and mobile phones.

So as part of your winding down, you should avoid these for at least an hour before bedtime.

A good sleep hygiene consists of:

1. Following a regular evening routine to induce relaxation.
2. Training your mind and body by winding down at the same time every evening
3. Eat your last meal around 6pm to allow your stomach to digest it
4. Take a shower or relaxing bath, burning candles

5. Add 6 drops of essential oils to your bath such as lavender, vetiver, cedarwood, roman chamomile, Ylang Ylang, petitgrain or marjoram depending on preference of aroma.
6. Use a footspa adding 4 drops of essential oil
7. If a partner, utilise them to massage your hands or feet with foot cream
8. Have a warm drink before retiring to bed
9. Read or listen to an audio book
10. Try listening to a relaxation or a meditation for sleep

#### Informative websites

Fall asleep better and faster – Every Mind Matters

Sleep Foundation

The Sleep Charity

A meditation for sleep.....