



Having trouble sleeping?

Information for people who use
services and carers

For a better life

From time to time we all have problems with sleep.

Being unwell, either mentally or physically can have a drastic effect on our ability to sleep well. Often people with trouble sleeping are prescribed medications to help, but the simple measures below can also be very effective.

Do's

- ▶ Do make sure that your bed and bedroom are as comfortable as possible – not too hot, not too cold, not too noisy
- ▶ Do stick to a routine as far as possible and get up at the same time each day, even if you went to bed late or didn't sleep well the night before
- ▶ Do try to exercise regularly. Even gentle exercise such as walking is beneficial. The best time to exercise is during the day – particularly late afternoon or early evening. Later than this can disturb your sleep, and you should avoid exercise in the two hours before bed
- ▶ Do take some time to relax properly before going to bed. Some people also find aromatherapy helpful
- ▶ Do try writing down any worries you may have before going to bed. If there is nothing you can do about it try to leave it to the next day
- ▶ Do try drinking a warm milky drink (but avoid caffeinated drinks such as tea or coffee). This can help relaxation before bed
- ▶ Do get involved in therapeutic activities such as relaxation where available.

If you need more advice, or would like to talk about any problems you may have with sleep, please speak to one of the nursing staff or your doctor. Remember, sleep is very important for our health and well-being and there may be other measures which can help, so please speak to your team.

Don't's

- ▶ Don't go without sleep for a long time
- ▶ Don't consume drinks containing caffeine such as tea, coffee or stimulant drinks after 4pm
- ▶ Don't nap during the day – it will prevent you from sleeping at night
- ▶ Don't drink a lot of alcohol. It might help you to get off to sleep, but you will probably have disrupted, poorer quality sleep
- ▶ Don't eat or drink too much late in the evening – heavy meals can cause indigestion and drinking too much late in the evening will mean you need to get up to use the toilet. Do make sure you stay well hydrated during the day however, by drinking at least 6-8 glasses of fluid
- ▶ Don't sleep late the next morning (even if you have had a bad night). This will make it harder to go to sleep the following night
- ▶ Don't use slimming tablets or street drugs such as ecstasy, cocaine or amphetamines - these are all stimulants and can keep you awake
- ▶ Don't do anything too arousing or stimulating before bed, such as watching a horror film, exercising etc
- ▶ Don't smoke around bedtime as this can prevent you from falling asleep.

If you would like this information in another format such as large print, Braille, easy read or another language please contact us on:

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