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## All You Need To Know To Improve Your Sleep Quality

Sleep. We all love it, many of us would like more of it, and some of us really struggle with it.

First up, sleep is important. It is when we are asleep that our body repairs itself, and if you frequently wake up at the same time in the night, it can indicate something going on with the part of your body which is repairing around that time.



We sleep in different stages, we have about 5 REM sleep cycles a night, starting about 70 minutes after falling asleep, each cycle lasting a little longer than the last and taking only 20-25% of your nights sleep. We then move into non-REM sleep, which starts with stages called n1 and n2, which take up most of your sleep time - 50-55%. Moving into n3, which is the deepest sleep (the one you're difficult to wake from and will feel very groggy if you do!) and takes about 15-20% of your sleep.

We should get 4-5 of these cycles every 24 hours in order to feel fully rested and recovered. If you're not feeling rested after a series of good nights sleeps, perhaps you're not sleeping as well as you could be.

So. How can we improve our sleep? A good nights sleep begins first thing in the morning, meaning whatever you do from the minute you get up will affect your sleep that night.

Get outside as early as you can every single morning, even if it's raining. Get some

sunlight to tell your body it's day time, get some activity to get your hormones flowing and your body going. If you want a cuppa, now is the time!

Try to keep your carbohydrate intake to dinner time only as it will help you switch off. Try not to eat dinner too late, give your body an hour and a half or so to digest before you go to bed. You won't get into a deep sleep while your body is trying to digest your dinner.

Try turning off your tv, phone, computer etc at about 9pm. Our body needs about 90 minutes of reduced blue light to start releasing sleep hormones. iPhone and iPad now have a blue light remover (settings, display & brightness, night shift) which you can set to come on every evening if you really must look at your screens. Some people are hugely affected by blue light, others not so much - it seems the more time you spend outside during the day, the less likely you are to be affected; if your light exposure is the same all day, how is your body to know whether it's day or night?

On the same note, get your bedroom as dark as possible.

Don't exercise too late, it can take 2-3 hours for your cortisol levels to fall after a workout. Cortisol is the stress hormone, and no one sleeps well when they're stressed! Sure, you might fall asleep through exhaustion, but you won't be getting deep sleep straight away.

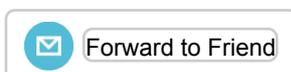
Lavender oil on your pillow can help improve your deep sleep too.

Are you struggling to get a good nights sleep? Do you wake up feeling rubbish every morning? Are you finding yourself recovering badly from workouts, or getting injured too often? [Send me a note](#) and we'll get you sorted.

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Until next time, enjoy staying healthy!

Best wishes,



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