



inspire®  
wellbeing for all

# Inspiration Point: Factsheet 7

## Sleep & Wellbeing



Sleep is instrumental for our physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing, as during sleep both our body and brains rest, recuperate and recharge for the following day. Sleep is one of the most important things when it comes to day-to-day happiness. A good bedtime routine helps your relationships, keeps your heart healthy and strengthens your immune system keeping you in top form!

**Monitor your sleep:** Keep a diary of your sleep patterns, when do you go to sleep, wake up, do you wake during the night, if so how many times. This information can give you an idea, when averaged, of how many hours sleep a night your body needs. You can use this data to create a good sleep routine.

**Sleep is a behaviour:** Sleep is like any behaviour, you have to practice. You need to get into a good routine with your sleeping patterns. Where possible try to have a regular time you go to bed and get up. The more you repeat this the more your body will learn when it is time to go to bed and wake up.

**Think about your evening routine:** What do you do in the evening before bedtime? Do you think these activities make sleep more or less likely?

**Caffeine:** You should reduce your caffeine intake in the evenings whether it be coffee/tea or a fizzy drink, as these are stimulants and can keep you awake.



**Alcohol:** A lot of people think alcohol makes them sleepy, often this can be the case. However, the type of sleep we get when alcohol is consumed is not the deep sleep our body needs to feel rested, it is poor quality shallow sleep.

**Exercise:** Exercising in the evenings can help with sleep. A moderate workout can tire us out and therefore ready us for sleep. Additionally, some exercise can help us burn our excess energy that our body creates during the day when we deal with our daily stressors.



**Associations:** We can learn to make connections between things in our environment. We should aim to connect our bed with the behaviour of sleeping. If we go to bed and sit on our phone, watch TV or play a computer game, our brain learns that bed is where we engage in these activities and are actively stimulated. This means in order to create the optimal conditions for sleep we should only use our bed for sleeping.

**Worries:** If you have things playing on your mind this can prevent you from being able to shut down in the evening and relax. Where possible it is helpful to deal with these worries before going to bed. You could make a note of the worry to allow you to come back at a more suitable time.

**If you are concerned about your own or someone else's sleep you can get help and advice by contacting your GP.**

**This information has been provided with thanks to Inspire Workplaces. Published March 2018.**

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