



## **SLEEP HYGIENE** *updated January 2026*

- An age-appropriate sleep schedule with consistent bedtimes and wake-times
  - Minimal weekday/weekend variation (ideally < 2 hours)
- A consistent bedtime routine
  - Ideally with 30-60 minutes 'wind-down' time before bed
- An appropriate bedroom environment: dark, quiet, relatively cool and comfortable
  - Ideally the bedroom should mainly be for sleep only
- Exposure to bright light (preferably sunlight) during the day
- Regular daytime exercise: not within 1-2 hours of the desired bedtime
- Regular daytime meals. Appropriate snacking but avoid large meals within 1 hour of bedtime
- Avoid exposure to bright light, especially electronics, in the 1-2 hours before bedtime
  - Switch to hand-eye co-ordination activities such as drawing or puzzles
- Ideally there should be no electronics (TV/computer/tablet/mobile phone) use in the bedroom
  - Limit overall use to 4 hours daily
- Restrict caffeine; ideally caffeine intake should be in the morning and early afternoon only and not >4pm or within 6hrs of bedtime
- Alcohol, drugs and nicotine/tobacco all have effects on quality of sleep
- Consider the side-effects of prescribed and over-the-counter medications and discuss with your doctor if you have concerns
- Avoid spending time in bed being deliberately awake. The bed should be for sleep only.
  - Get up if not asleep in 20 minutes

### **Online support:**

<https://www.justtalkherts.org/news-and-campaigns/tips-for-a-great-nights-sleep.aspx> *(JustTalk)*

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications) *(Mental Health Foundation)*

<https://web.ntw.nhs.uk/selfhelp/> *(NHS trust)*

<https://www.sleepio.com/>

<https://thesleepcharity.org.uk/> *Sleep helpline: 03303 530 541: Sun-Tues/Thurs 7-9pm; Wed 9-11am*

[www.sleepfoundation.org](http://www.sleepfoundation.org)

General NHS information: [Sleep and young children - NHS](#)

[How to sleep better | HPFT Talking Therapies.](#)

Sleep hygiene information can be found at [GOSH Sleep Hygiene in children.pdf](#)

### **Mindfulness sleep modules:**

[www.smilingmind.com.au](http://www.smilingmind.com.au) *Smiling Mind app*

[www.headspace.com](http://www.headspace.com) *Headspace app*