

Wellbeing in Mind

Communication in Mind

Skills in Mind

Mood in Mind

Activities in Mind

PRIORY

PRIVATE
HEALTHCARE

What is Sleep Hygiene?

‘Sleep hygiene’ is not about being clean while you sleep! It is the term used to describe good sleep habits. Below is a set of guidelines and tips which are designed to enhance good sleeping. There is much evidence to suggest that these strategies can provide long-term solutions to sleep difficulties.



Tips

Get regular. One of the best ways to train your body to sleep well is to go to bed and get up at more or less the same time every day, even on weekends! This regular rhythm will make you feel better and will give your body something to work from.

Sleep when sleepy. Only try to sleep when you actually feel tired or sleepy, rather than spending too much time awake in bed.

Get up and try again. If you haven't been able to get to sleep after about 20 minutes or more, get up and do something calming or boring until you feel sleepy, then return to bed and try again. Avoid doing anything that is too stimulating or interesting, as this will wake you up even more. If you are going to read, read something boring, not the newest novel that you won't want to put down!

Avoid caffeine. Caffeine can be found in more than you think! It's in coffee, tea, cola drinks, chocolate, and some medications. It is best to avoid consuming any caffeine for at least 4-6 hours before going to bed. These substances act as stimulants and interfere with the ability to fall asleep.

Bed is for sleeping. Try not to use your bed for anything other than sleeping, so that your body comes to associate bed with sleep. If you use bed as a place to watch TV, eat, read or study on your laptop, your body will not learn this connection.

No naps. It is best to avoid taking naps during the day, to make sure that you are tired at bedtime. If you can't make it through the day without a nap, make sure it is for less than an hour and before 3pm.

Sleep rituals. You can develop your own rituals of things to remind your body that it is time to sleep - some people find it useful to do relaxing stretches or breathing exercises before bed each night, or sit calmly with a cup of caffeine-free tea.

Bathtime. Having a hot bath 1-2 hours before bedtime can be useful, as it will raise your body temperature, causing you to feel sleepy as your body temperature drops again. Research shows that sleepiness is associated with a drop in body temperature.