



WeSleep

HOW TO SLEEP BETTER DURING TOUGH TIMES

SLEEP CHEAT SHEET

A FREE GUIDE TO IMPROVING YOUR SLEEP



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SLEEP MATTERS



Sleep is a pillar of physical health, mental health and wellbeing - essential for tissue repair, cell regeneration, immune function, memory, and for regulating mood and emotions.

Imagine if you got longer and more quality sleep. You could be even better at everything you do, in all areas of life: perform better at work, be more engaged at home, give your best while exercising and be your best in your personal and professional relationships. You would be happier, more performant and engaged.

SLEEP BOOSTS YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

Sleep is also known to boost your immune system, so it is a fantastic way to help combat COVID-19 or any other viruses or infections. Sleep helps boosts the production of protective white cells. And going through at least 4 to 5 sleep cycles promotes the production of the protein cytokine which tells the body where to direct white blood cells to fight infections. With less of it, the body will struggle to fight them.

So, how is your sleep usually? And how has it been since the COVID-19 pandemic started?



WESLEEP COVID-19 SURVEY

(March – April 2020)



Question:

How has COVID affected your sleep?

- 23% said they sleep worse than before COVID
- 29% said they sleep about the same yet feel more worried and more anxious than before
- 34% said they sleep about the same
- 14% said they sleep better

Participants who “sleep worse” or who are “more worried and anxious” (52%) tend to have difficulty falling asleep, vivid dreams and trouble staying asleep.

Participants who “sleep better” (14%) tend to feel less social and work pressure and feel more in control of their days. That said, note that sleeping much longer hours but not feeling rested could also be a sign of mental or emotional exhaustion or mild depression.

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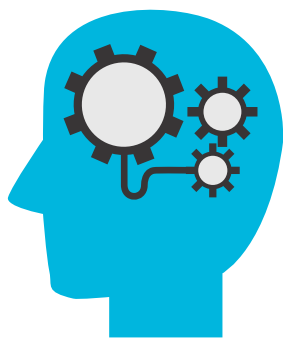
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6 LIKELY REASONS FOR SLEEPING WORSE SINCE COVID-19

REASON 1:

A physiological stress response triggered by emotions such as feeling unsafe, a lack of control and predictability, financial worries, feelings of loss and insecurity, which triggers:

- > high levels of stress hormones (cortisol, adrenaline)
- > heart rate and blood pressure increase
- > accelerated breath



REASON 2:

Mental health conditions affecting sleep such as anxiety and depression triggered by the loss of a loved one, isolation, loneliness due to the lack of contact with others.

REASON 3:

Not getting not enough natural light throughout the day, which impacts the production of happy hormone and the release of sleep hormone melatonin - this is due to spending much more time indoors and working from home .



REASON 4:

Consuming more stimulants (alcohol, caffeine, nicotine, drugs) or unhealthy foods disrupting our natural sleep process.

REASON 5:

Difficulties sticking to a structured schedule, adapting to a new schedule or struggling with keeping boundaries due to:

- our living space becoming multi-purpose
- losing the sense of time
- feeling lethargic, overwhelmed and stuck
- not following a regular day-night routine



REASON 6:

Spending more time with addictive entertainment (Netflix, video games, social media) as a result of boredom, stress and a lack of discipline. Which keeps alertness levels high close to bedtime, pushing people to resist the urge to sleep.

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8 ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR LONGER AND BETTER SLEEP

1. Create boundaries

2. Manage anxiety and stress factors

3. Adopt a lights routine

4. Create a sleep sanctuary

5. Regulate your body temperature

6. Wind down before bedtime

7. Monitor your nutrition

8. Try herbal remedies & supplements

9. Consult your doctor if...



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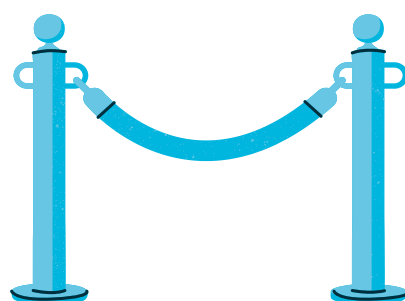
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8 ESSENTIAL TIPS FOR LONGER AND BETTER SLEEP

TIP #1: CREATE BOUNDARIES

Support your internal body clock by sending the right signals to the brain at the right time.



Structure your days with regularity and consistence:

1. Go to bed and wake up at the same time every day, even weekends.
2. Only head to bed as soon as you feel sleepy and don't oversleep in bed.
3. Eat meals at the same time every day.
4. Be disciplined with blocks of time to work, exercise and taking breaks.
5. If you can, make your sleep schedule follow your chronotype and natural energy curve more closely - are you an early bird, a night owl, a teenager?
6. Didn't sleep well the night before? Keep up with your usual activities instead of napping - it will help you sleep better the following night.

Avoid napping or limit naps to a time before 4-5pm, and no longer than 30 mins (if napping prevents you from sleeping through the night).

Stop entirely (or limit) the consumption of stimulants and avoid them during the 4-6 hours before bedtime (alcohol, caffeine, nicotine).

Needless to say but... avoid ALL recreational drugs including ecstasy, marijuana, and cocaine.

Replace stimulants by daytime exercise at least 30 mins a day, preferably outdoors.

Help your subconscious brain associate your bedroom with sleep:

1. Dedicate your bed to sleep and intimacy only.
2. Keep work, entertainment and exercise outside your bedroom.
3. Leave your bedroom whenever you are awake for longer than 20 minutes.
4. If waking up during the night and unable to fall back asleep, get out of bed and engage in a gentle relaxing activity outside of your bedroom, keeping the lights low and return as soon you feel sleepy again.



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TIP#2: MANAGE ANXIETY & STRESS FACTORS



- **Consider only trusted sources of news and information.**
- **Limit social media and news intake** to 15-20 minutes, twice a day maximum.
- **And replace them by the following:**
 1. Dedicate up to 15 minutes “worry time” maximum - write down everything that worries you.
 2. Dedicate up to 5-15 minutes of “gratitude time” - write down everything you can think of that you appreciate and that is good in your life.
 3. Think of each issue and establish what you have control over and if you do, write down 3 concrete actions to resolve the issue, and plan when you will do them.
 4. Prioritise your To-do's for the next day.
- **Stay connected** with friends and loved ones frequently, do not stay asocial and removed from society (call, write, email, get on video chats, help others).
- **Explore guided meditation, mindfulness, and deep "belly" breathing exercises to manage your physiological anxiety.**
- **Don't stare at the clock** while in bed, put it away if needed.



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TIP#3: ADOPT A LIGHTS ROUTINE

- Spend 30 minutes a day outdoors between 10am and 4pm, even if it is cloudy or raining.
- Allow as much natural bright daylight into your home as possible.
- Dim artificial lights down from 2 hours before bedtime.
- Sleep in a pitch-dark bedroom.
- Cover up indicator lights from chargers, alarm clocks, LED displays in the bedroom.
- Use eye masks or black out curtains or blinds if necessary.



TIP#4: CREATE A SLEEP SANCTUARY



- Ensure your bedroom is dark, quiet, well ventilated, and cool.
- Limit environmental and startling noises, if hearing them affects your sleep.
- Use earplugs or masking ambient sounds (e.g. rainfall, gentle music or white noise).
- Sleep on comfortable mattress and pillows – change at least every 7 years or less.

TIP#5: REGULATE YOUR BODY TEMPERATURE

- Keep it cool (16-21 Celsius / 60-70 Fahrenheit degrees).
- During heatwaves, use fans, air conditioners, water mists, ice packs, cotton/linen materials.
- In winter, if you are cold, do not overheat the room itself. Instead use socks and hot water bottle inside the bed, or an electric blanket with a automatic shut off system.



TIP#6: WIND DOWN BEFORE BEDTIME



- Allow 2 hours to transition from active to relaxed mode, and bring your stress hormones levels down.
- Avoid stimulating activities, work, arguments or emotional stress.
- Avoid intensive exercise 3-4 hours before bedtime then follow a cool down routine post exercise.
- Try a hot shower or bath 1-2 hours before bedtime. The rise and drop in body temperature will help make you feel sleepy.
- Relax and stop any stimulating activity 2-3 hours before bed: e.g. work, studying, computers, smartphones, TV, video games, social media.
- Journaling: write your accomplishments (even small), next day's priorities, uneasy feelings.
- Experiment with body relaxation techniques for 5-10 minutes
- Practice slow and deep belly breathing exercises.
- Try relaxing sounds with noise cancelling headphones.

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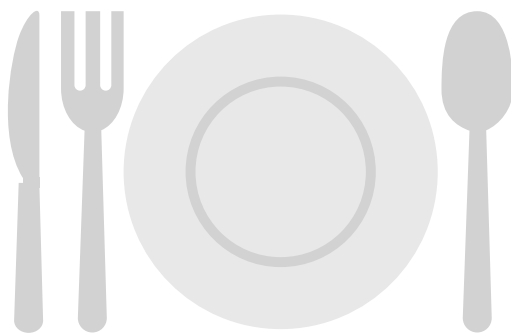
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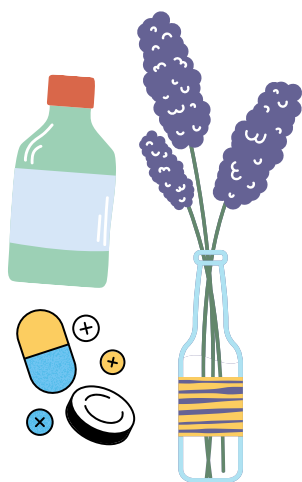
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TIP#7: MONITOR YOUR NUTRITION

- Avoid large meals at least 2-3 hours before bedtime.
- Don't go to bed starving – if needed, nibble on non-sugary protein and slow carbs snacks to avoid blood sugar drops during the night.
- Eat tryptophan rich foods such as: turkey, chicken, lamb, salmon, tuna, halibut, cod, sardines, shrimps, eggs, pumpkin and sesame seeds, black and kidney beans, milk, yogurt, almonds, green leafy vegetables, lettuce, cucumber, celery, tomatoes, lentils, chick peas, grains, brown rice, rye bread, oats, quinoa, bananas, apricots.
- Drink lots during the day but stop drinking any liquids between 1.5 to 2 hours before sleep and empty your bladder before bedtime.
- Remember that caffeine can be found in coffee, but also in black tea, chocolate, and in some energy drinks like Redbull, colas, sodas or in some pain relievers.



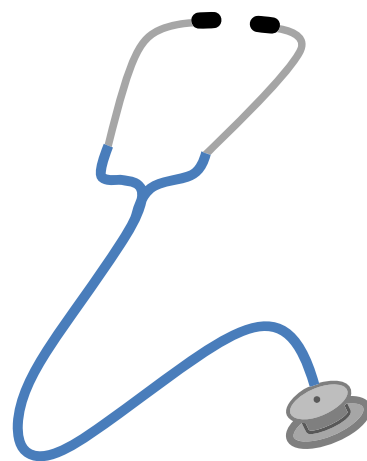
TIP#8: HERBAL REMEDIES & SUPPLEMENTS



- Take supplements if you have any deficiencies: Vitamin D3, magnesium glycinate, calcium, iron, vitamin B-complex.
- Try herbal remedies containing passiflora, skullcap, ashwagandha, valerian, hops, chamomille.
- Try CBD oil drops.
- Try aromatherapy: roman chamomile, lemon balm, neroli, clary sage, sweet marjoram, lavender, ylang ylang.

CONSULT WITH YOUR DOCTOR, IF...

- You suspect any prescriptions might be impacting your sleep.
- Pain prevents you from sleeping.
- You have severe snoring or breathing issue, and you gasp for air while sleeping.
- You are experiencing unusual sleep behaviours (for example, sleep walking, narcolepsy during the day, restless arms or legs during the night, unable to sleep before morning or regularly fall asleep before sunset).



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