

Sleep during times of uncertainty

The current lockdown means that many of us have disrupted routines and are largely confined to our homes. This can affect our sleep cycle and our mood. Sleep is essential for learning, growth, cell repair and memory consolidation. Below are some easy steps we can all take to ensure we get good quality sleep even at times of uncertainty.

1. It's important to keep a good sleep routine. Set yourself a bedtime and get up at the same time each day.
2. Start your day with some gentle exercise. There are currently lots of free online workouts that can help you to get started each morning.
3. Avoid stimulating activity in the hour before bedtime, including TV, tablets and consoles.
4. Avoid drinks of cola, chocolate, tea and coffee i.e. caffeine and additives before bedtime. Instead have a warm milk drink.
5. Avoid going to bed hungry, a small carby snack like porridge, toast or an oaty biscuit may help you settle to sleep.
6. Make sure that your room is quiet and dark.
7. Keep room temperature to a comfortable level. High temperatures disturb sleep.
8. Keep room clear of distractions and electronic equipment such as TV and consoles. Do not sleep with your phone. It's a distraction you don't need, and is likely to disturb your sleep, especially if you keep checking the news.
9. You should try to fall asleep in your bed, with the lights off. This will mean your sleep is less likely to be disturbed later in the night.
10. It is normal to wake up 2-3 times in the night. Many of us roll over and go back to sleep without even realising. If you wake in the night avoid checking your phone or looking at digital devices. Try to stay in bed and do something relaxing like deep breathing or meditating.



Finally – Get enough sleep. The amount of sleep we need depends on our age. As a guide 16 year olds should be aiming for 8.5 hours sleep a night. Lack of sleep will affect learning, growth, cell repair and memory consolidation

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If you are having difficulty with sleep you can find support and information put together by sleep professionals at: www.sleepscotland.org