the Greencore way

Sleep Hygiene
Factsheet

Sleep Hygiene

Sleep it off — never underestimate the power of a good night's sleep

One in three UK adults suffer from disrupted sleep and nearly a quarter manage no more than five hours a night.

Although an occasional night without sleep will make you feel tired and irritable, it won't harm your health. But after several sleepless nights, the effects become more serious. Your brain will fog, making it difficult to concentrate and make decisions. Your risk of injury and accidents at home, work and on the road will also increase.

Sleep and your mental health

Sleep has an important restorative function in 'recharging' the brain at the end of each day. Maintaining a regular sleep-wake cycle allows the natural rhythm of the body to be reset, optimising brain function.

Ongoing poor sleep can be a huge risk for the development of major depressive problems. Recent research established a link between lack of sleep and depression and anxiety.

Sleep and your physical health

Consistent disrupted sleep can have a negative impact on your immune system and you may feel run down and be more susceptible to coughs and colds.

It not only leaves you feeling tired with lack of focus but can increase your risk for a wide range of more serious diseases and health problems, such as obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke and shortened life expectancy.

Sleep Hygiene

Sleep diary

Help keep track of when you don't sleep well and the possible reasons why by keeping a sleep diary.

Use these questions to help you log your quality of sleep for at least a week.

- How did you sleep last night?
- What time did you go to bed?
- Roughly how long did it take you to get to sleep?
- How many times did you wake up in the night?
- What time did you wake up?
- How long did you sleep for in total?
- What did you eat and drink within four hours of going to bed?
- How long before bed did you have it?
- What was the temperature outside and in your bedroom?
- What light sources were there when you went to sleep?
- How much noise was there when you went to sleep?
- What activities did you do before you went to sleep?
- How did you feel the next day (1 = awful, 5 = average, 10 = great)?

Sleep Hygiene

There are five stages of sleep

Stage one
Between being awake and being asleep, light sleep.

Stage two
Beginning of sleep, becoming disengaged from surroundings, breathing and heart rate are regular, body temperature drops.

Stages three and four
Deepest and most restorative sleep, blood pressure drops, breathing becomes slower, muscles are relaxed, blood supply to muscles increases (aiding recovery), tissues growth and repair occurs, energy is restored, hormones are released.

Stage five - REM (25% of night)
First occurs about 90 minutes after falling asleep and recurs about every 90 minutes, getting longer later in the night, provides energy to brain and body; supports daytime performance, brain is active and dreams occur, eyes dart back and forth, body becomes immobile and relaxed as muscles are turned off.

Sleep Hygiene

How food and drink affects sleep

Tryptophan
Foods containing amino acid Tyrptophan (e.g. Eggs, Chicken, Fish, Turkey, Nuts) - a building block of the sleep-related chemical Serotonin, could potentially make you drowsy.

Carbohydrates
Carbohydrates make Tryptophan more available to the brain. If you are going to eat a light snack before bed try milk, cereal or wholewheat crackers with a small amount of peanut butter.

Fatty, Fried or Spicy
Fatty, fried or spicy foods are best avoided before bed as they are more likely to challenge the stomach.

Stimulants
Try to avoid stimulants like caffeine and alcohol up to five hours before bed as they can disrupt sleep.

Protein
It is best to eat protein rich and larger meals at breakfast and lunch when your body needs the day time energy.

Sleep Hygiene

How much sleep do we need?

As we get older the amount of sleep that we need reduces.

Hours of Sleep

Newborn 0-3 months	Infant 4-11 months	Toddler 1-2 years	Pre-School 3-5 years	School Age 6-13 years	Teen 14-17 years	Young Adult 18-25 years	Adult 26-64 years	Older Adult 65+ years
18-19	16-18	15-16	14	12	11	10-11	10	9
14-17	12-15	11-14	10-13	9-11	8-10	7-9	7-9	7-8
11-13	10-11	9-10	8-9	7-8	7	6	6	5-6

Age

■ Recommended   ■ May be appropriate   ■ Not recommended

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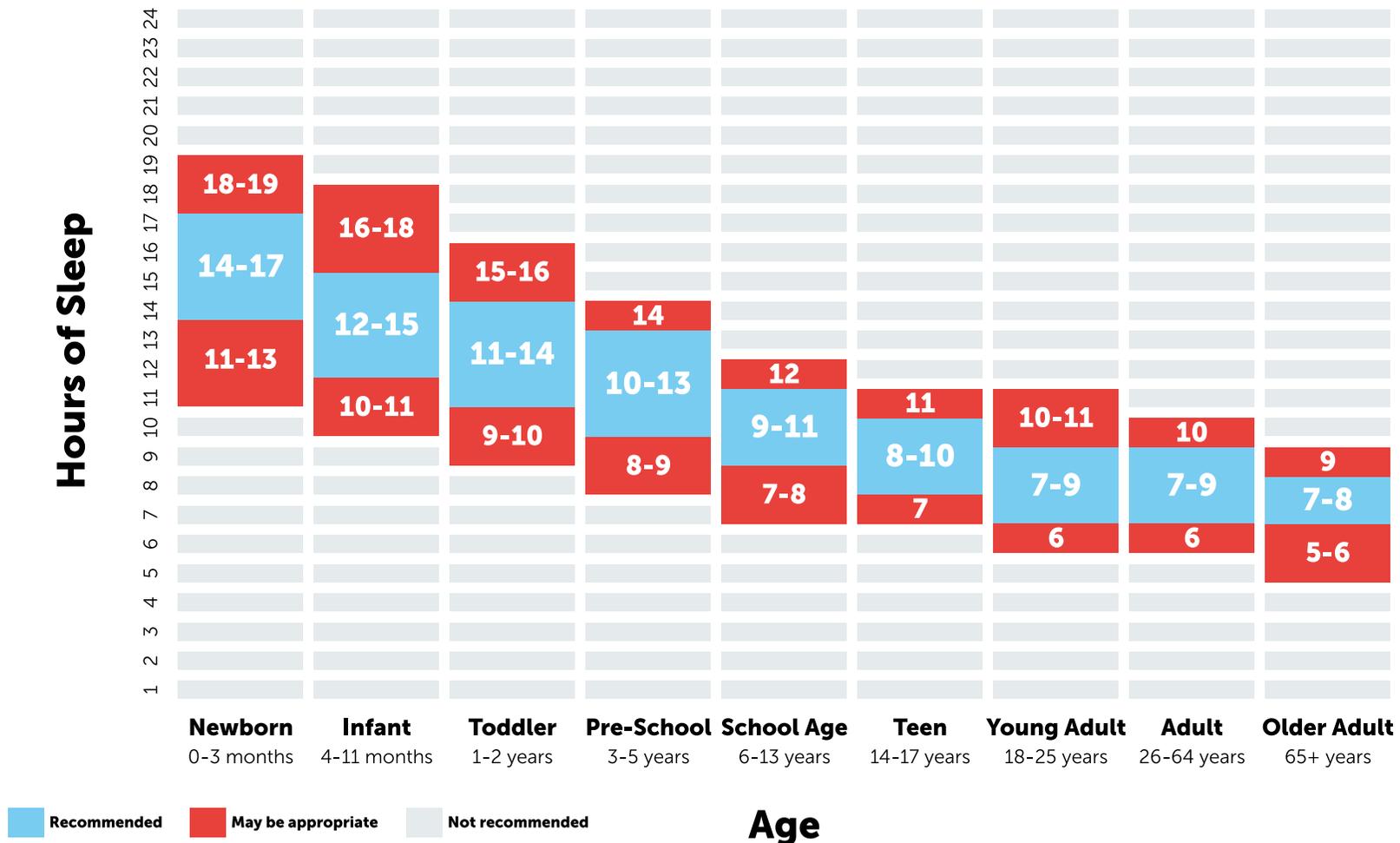
Tips for a good night sleep

Routine
Have a set routine every night before you go to bed

Time
Try and go to bed around the same time every night

Stimulants
Avoid stimulants - excessive caffeine or sugar especially before bed

Lights
Avoid bright lights at least three hours before bed including TV, phone screens, computers, overhead lights

Eating
Avoid eating three hours before bed time

Conditions
Make room conditions cool, dark and quiet

Exercise
Exercise for between 30 and 60 minutes daily so that your body is tired enough to sleep

Clock Watching
Don't watch the clock - could make you feel more stressed, making it more difficult to sleep

Sleep Hygiene

Sleep and stress - bedtime routine

🛏 Bedtime routine plays a massive part in the sleep vs stress correlation.

🛏 Make sure you unwind / relax before bed time.

🛏 If you have things on your mind write them down - this will help to empty the thoughts from your mind.

1 Feelings of worry
Poor sleep

2 Lack of sleep
Poor start to the day

3 Tiredness
Poor performance

4 Exhaustion
Difficulty coping with daily life

5 Worry
Low self esteem

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Four pillars of sleep

If you compromise on sleep, you compromise on your health, performance, mood, and your relationships. **Help HEAL your sleep problems with these top tips:**

Health
It's always tricky to get a good night's sleep when we have an existing health issue. Whether that's a blocked nose, headache, or mental health problems, it's important to speak with your doctor about how you can tackle both your health concern and your poor sleep.

Environment
Try to keep your bedroom as a peaceful haven that you associate with sleep. Keep distractions like TV, computer games and eating for another room in the house. Keep it dark, quiet and a cool temperature.

Attitude
Lying awake worrying can make it hard to drift off. Try a sleep app or audio guide that will talk you through relaxation and breathing techniques to settle your mind. If you still can't get to sleep after some time. Get up and make a warm drink. Then try again.

Lifestyle
What you do during the day will have a big impact on your sleep during the night. Stay hydrated and eat a fresh balanced diet. And get outside to exercise (in the morning if possible) and absorb plenty of natural daylight that will activate your sleep hormones.
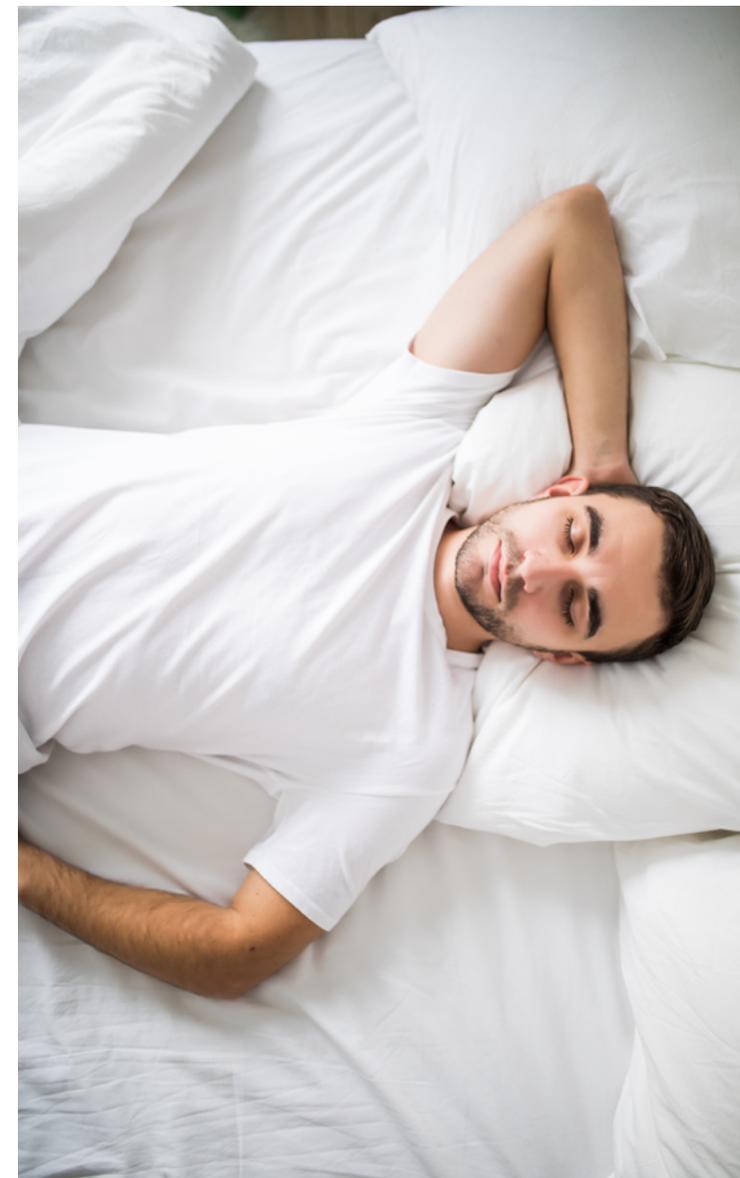
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Making every day taste better