

'Good Sleep Guide'

The following tips should help you get into a good sleep pattern



During the evening

1. Put the day to rest. Tie up loose ends in your mind. A notebook may help.
2. Take some light exercise in the early evening eg go for a walk. Exercise later in the evening can disturb your sleep.
3. Wind down in the course of the evening, ideally with a regular routine. Try to avoid anything mentally demanding within 90 minutes of bedtime.
4. Don't sleep or doze on the sofa.
5. Have a light supper and avoid drinks such as coffee/tea/cola after 6pm. Try decaffeinated, milk-based drinks or herbal beverages.
6. Make your bedroom comfortable; not too cold/hot. Use earplugs if necessary.

At bedtime



1. Go to bed when you are 'sleepy tired'.
2. Don't watch TV in bed.
3. Set the alarm for the same time every day until your sleep pattern settles.
4. Put the lights out when you get into bed.
5. Enjoy relaxing even if at first you don't fall asleep.
6. Don't **try** to fall asleep; sleep cannot be 'switched on'.

If you have a problem getting to sleep



1. Sleep problems are common and not as damaging as you might think.
2. If you are awake for more than 20 minutes, get up and go into another room.
3. Do something relaxing (try reading) and don't worry about tomorrow.
4. People usually cope quite well after a restless night.
5. Go back to bed when you are 'sleepy tired'.
6. Remember the tips from the above section.

A good sleep pattern may take a number of weeks to establish.

If you have had problems for years then it will take longer.

Be confident that you will get there in the end!