

Sleep Well

Good sleep is key to having a good day at CUK...

...and is just as important as regular exercise and a healthy diet.

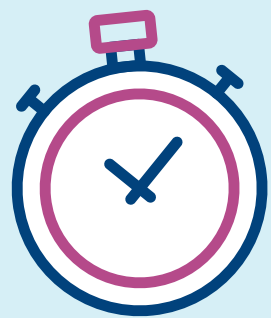
Benefits of good sleep

GOOD SLEEP =
7-9
HOURS EVERY DAY

- ✓ **Improve your brain function:** good sleep can maximise problem-solving skills and enhance memory while poor sleep has been shown to impair brain function and decision-making skills.
- ✓ **Stay physically fit and well:** getting enough sleep has been shown to improve many aspects of athletic and physical performance. In contrast, not enough sleep has been linked to heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, Alzheimer's and depression.
- ✓ **Maintain your weight:** lack of sleep can increase your appetite and cravings for foods high in sugar and fat.
- ✓ **Boost your immune system:** at least seven hours of sleep can improve your immune function and help fight the common cold.
- ✓ **Better manage emotions:** good sleep supports good social skills and the ability to process emotions.

Top tips to get good sleep

- 1 Eat well:** don't go to bed too hungry or too full. Avoid nicotine, caffeine and alcohol too (alcohol might make you feel sleepy, but it disrupts sleep later on).
- 2 Exercise:** Regular physical activity can promote better sleep but avoid being active too close to bedtime. Make sure you also get fresh air every day.
- 3 Write your worries down:** Getting your worries out of your head is proven to help reduce anxiety and stress and improve sleep. Do it every day in a journal or the notes app of your phone.
- 4 Follow a sleep schedule:** aim for the same amount of sleep every day to reinforce your body's sleep-wake cycle. If you don't fall asleep within 20 minutes, read or listen to soothing music and try again once you're tired. Repeat as needed.
- 5 Get comfy:** Switch off lights or wear a sleep mask to block out light sources. Make sure your bedding is warm/cool enough, and if it's noisy, try a white noise app to block out sounds.



Time to learn more about sleep?

Click on the links below.

- 4 min read** Find out more about your [sleep cycle](#)
- 5 min read** Are you sleep deprived? Take [this self-assessment](#)
- 7 min read** [10 things](#) you may not know about sleep
- 7 min read** Take [this quiz](#) to learn more about the importance of good sleep
- 15 min read** [Why we sleep](#); the new science of sleep and dreams
- 120 min listen** Sleep and health; [daily steps](#) to sleep better and reduce inflammation



Keep a sleep diary

Make a note of when you slept well or poorly, and it'll help you identify possible reasons why that happened. Complete for at least a week.

- How did you sleep?
- What time did you go to bed?
- How long did it take you to fall asleep?
- How many times did you wake up?
- How long did you sleep for in total?
- What did you eat /drink within four hours of bed and at what time (EG Coffee and chocolate bar 30 min before bed).
- What was the temperature in your room?
- What light sources were there?
- How much noise was there?
- What activities did you do before bed? (EG Gym one hour before bed)
- Any other comments?
- How did you feel the next day (1 = awful, 5 = average, 10 = great) Include notes too (EG drowsy, grumpy, anxious).

Try this to fall asleep in two minutes

Practice every day for six weeks

- 1** Relax your entire face, including the muscles inside your mouth, and focus on your breathing
- 2** Drop your shoulders to release the tension and let your hands drop to the side of your body
- 3** Exhale, relaxing your chest
- 4** Relax your stomach, thighs, knees, legs and feet
- 5** Clear your mind for 10 seconds by imagining a relaxing scene
- 6** If this doesn't work, try saying the words "don't think" over and over for 10 seconds

Need extra support?

We all have the occasional sleepless night, but if these happen regularly, there's sources of support available.

Fleet:

Visit the Medical Centre or contact your Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)

Shore:

Speak to your GP, Occupational Health or your Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)



Our **Mental Health First Aiders and Champions** can provide support and signpost you to additional help if and when you need it.

