

Sleep Medication

The effects of sleeping tablets or sedatives are usually short-term and using these should be avoided. If used over a long period of time, it can lead to dependency on sleep medication.

Sleeping tablets make you breathe more slowly and less deeply. This can be dangerous for people with Asthma or COPD.



Taking sleeping tablets can make you feel drowsy the next day. The best way to feel refreshed after sleeping is to have a natural sleep. Long term use of sleeping tablets may affect your ability to produce the hormone which helps you to sleep, and therefore making your sleep problems worse.

This sleep hygiene leaflet is part of a wider range of health and wellbeing information from DISC.

Ask your Support Worker if there are any more health and wellbeing issues that you would like to receive information about.



Health and Wellbeing



Sleep Hygiene



What is Sleep Hygiene?

Sleep hygiene is a variety of different things that are needed in order to have normal, quality sleep.

The aim of sleep hygiene is to create a regular waking and sleeping pattern seven days a week. Having a good sleep hygiene routine can help anyone maximise the hours they spend sleeping. It can even help people whose sleep is affected by insomnia, jet lag or shift work.

This leaflet will give you some helpful tips on why you may not be sleeping properly, and what you can do to get the best sleep you can by making a few simple changes.



Why Can't I Sleep?

Not being able to sleep is usually due to a combination of factors. It's important to try and pinpoint the reason you can't sleep so that you can find the right solution.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Is your bedroom very bright?
- Is your bedroom very noisy?
- Do you have any personal issues or worries on your mind?
- Do you drink or smoke?
- Do you drink coffee, fizzy drinks or energy drinks?
- Are you overweight?
- Do you eat before bedtime?
- Do you use a computer, smart phone or watch TV before bed?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, this may be having an affect on your sleep. Try to rectify each question you answered yes to, as you may be able to sleep better. You should contact your GP if you continue to have broken sleep.

The next page gives tips on what you can do to improve your sleep.

Tips for Better Sleep

Have a bedtime routine and try to stick to it 7 days a week.

Use blackout blinds or an eye mask if your bedroom is too bright. Use ear-plugs if there is a lot of noise.

Avoid using a phone, computer or watching TV before bed, as this will keep your brain alert.

Avoid drinking caffeine 4-6 hours before you go to bed so that your brain is less stimulated.

Nicotine is also a stimulant and so smoking should be avoided before bedtime.

Alcohol may make you feel sleepy, but it causes you to wake during the night, so avoid it before bed.

A large meal before bed will interfere with your sleep. Stick to light snacks if you are hungry.

Don't lie in bed worrying. Get up and do something. Try sleeping again in 20 minutes.