



THE UNIVERSITY
of ADELAIDE

SLEEP

Improve it

Student Life - Counselling Support

Rest and sleep can be achieved in many ways. If you aren't getting quality sleep, these suggestions may help and may also help to improve the efficiency of your sleep.

Value sleep

- Valuing sleep will assist you to commit to achieving better sleep.
- Sleep is the recovery time for a good life.
- The body needs rest, like fertilising and watering a plant.
- Success in life comes from the right balance between activity and recovery. Recovery helps return your mind and body to effective activity. If you value sleep, sleep is more likely to happen.

Study and sleep

Study and learning are more efficient when you are well rested. It is, mostly, a false economy to reduce sleep, to do more study. When you reduce sleep to study, what usually happens is that you get less efficient at learning and then you need more time to study. It can be a vicious cycle.

Many activities can be done while you are tired: chatting online; texting; speaking to friends; watching television. Study, however, needs a well-rested mind.

Be realistic

What are you trying to fit into your life? Some people cannot sleep because they have committed themselves to so many other things that there is not enough time left for proper sleep.

Biological Rhythm of Sleep

The biological rhythm of sleep involves shifts in the depth of sleep so often people rise out of deep sleep and move close to wakefulness or even wake up. If we accept the naturalness of this shift, we can sink back down into deep sleep, rather than our thinking mind worrying about waking up.

One activity at a time

- Many sleep problems are caused by trying to do two things at once (e.g. sleep and worry).
- Your bed should ideally be for sleep and not for study.
- If you make your bed a space that is for sleep then it will be much easier to switch off your mind when you are in bed.
- If you cannot sleep, that is okay. Resting in bed, for short periods of time, is still a valuable use of your time.

Thinking, problem solving, and worry

- Try not to do heavy problem solving in bed.
- Find another time and place to think, problem solve or worry but not too close to bed time.
- If you start to think, make an appointment with yourself to do it in your thinking time and thinking place the next day.
- It helps to remember if you cannot solve a problem, sleep deprivation is not going to solve it.

- Many people have the belief that if they cannot sleep, they might as well use the time productively to think about things. The problem with this strategy is that it quickly turns into a habit. Boredom is a great precursor to sleep.

Transition from waking to sleep

- It is useful to think of waking up as a process of raising your energy levels, and sleep as a process of lowering your energy levels. In the transition phase you want to lower your energy levels. Rituals as part of the transition to sleep process are helpful (e.g. having a shower, a non-stimulating drink, sleep inducing reading, prayer).

Traps before bed time

- Web surfing
- Social media
- Phone conversation or texting
- Serious conversations
- Energetic exercise
- Working late at night

Reading

- There is an art to reading that helps you relax and transition to sleep. Choose content which calms the mind. Reading that engages, excites or hooks you should be done earlier in the night, on weekends or holidays.
- Study is best not done in bed.
- It is best to not store your laptop close to where you sleep.

Setting up the room for sleep

- It is ideal to sleep and study in separate rooms however sometimes this is unavoidable.
- Try to position your clock so you cannot see it from your bed.

Replacement activity

Try to have a replacement activity to engage your mind if you cannot sleep or are overthinking. Some suggestions are:

- Nursery rhythm
- Meditation or prayer
- Sleep inducing music
- Counting sheep

It is actually better to say a poem 1000 times than to overthink. You will most likely fall to sleep because your mind will become bored.

Auditing Your Commitments - Is there Enough Time for Sleep?

Weekly Timetable

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1 am							
2 am							
3 am							
4 am							
5 am							
6 am							
7 am							
8 am							
9 am							
10 am							
11 am							
12 am							
1 pm							
2 pm							
3 pm							
4 pm							
5 pm							
6 pm							
7 pm							
8 pm							
9 pm							
10 pm							
11 pm							
12 pm							

Complete the timetable, include:

- study commitments
- work hours
- sporting activities
- recreation activities
- relaxation time
- any other commitments
- time allocated for sleep

And then assess the following:

- do you have 8 hours for sleep?
- is there a transition time leading to sleep?
- is there a thinking time outside of sleep time?

Counselling Support is available to assist students with personal difficulties that are affecting their study.

The service provides:

- Individual counselling by appointment
- Face to face, virtual and phone appointments
- Mental health emergency response

Counselling Support

Ground Floor, Horace Lamb Building

The University of Adelaide

Ph: +61 8 8313 5663

After hours support: 1300 167 654 or sms 0488 884 197