Teen sleep
everything you need to know

With **all of us** in mind.

Getting a good night's sleep improves our physical and mental health. If we sleep well our mood is improved, we concentrate and remember things better. We feel less emotional and more able to cope. When we have a good night's sleep we feel healthier. We are less likely to pick up illnesses, and our immune system is stronger. Having a good night's sleep improves our athletic performance and will even improve our skin and gives us glossy hair, giving us that healthy glow.

68% of teens do not get enough sleep during the school week. It is particularly difficult for teenagers to sleep well because the hormone that makes us sleepy – melatonin – is delayed in teens. Also, being on gadgets at night (including phones), drinking energy drinks or other caffeinated products and having worries or feeling stressed can impact on teens getting a good night's sleep.

So, for teens especially, it is really important to be doing all the right things to get a good night's sleep.

Tips for better sleep for teenagers
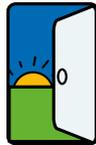
Set a **regular bedtime**	**Exercise regularly**	**Spend time outdoors**	**Avoid napping**	**Avoid stimulants**
and stick to it	during the day	especially in the morning to set your body clock		such as tea, coffee, chocolate, alcohol, cigarettes and energy drinks
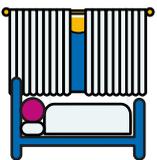
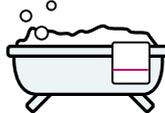| Keep your **bedroom**	**Turn devices off**	Choose **relaxing, calm activities**	Try **sleepy foods** for supper	Sleep for around **9 hours** per night
cool and dark and clutter free	an hour before you want to go to sleep	to do before bed – a warm bath is great!	These include milk, yogurt, cheese, bananas, wholewheat bread and cereal	(this is the average sleep needed for a teenager)

Are you a sleepy teenager?
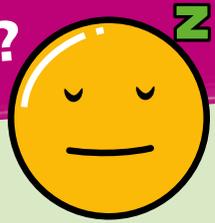
Do you...

Find it difficult to wake up on a morning and often sleep through your alarm?

Feel irritable or bad tempered during the day?

Fall asleep during the day?

Sleep in on a weekend?

Sometimes feel low, stressed or feel that you can't cope?

Feel very emotional?

Find it difficult to concentrate or focus?

Check your phone late or through the night?

Spend time on devices late or through the night?

Feel tired and lethargic through the day?

Have general aches and pains, pick up bugs often?

Crave certain foods and drinks and feel hungry?

Drink caffeinated products including energy drinks regularly?

TRUE or FALSE?

You should eat a huge meal just before bed.

TRUE **FALSE**

Going to bed at the same time every day helps you to sleep well.

TRUE **FALSE**

Getting up around the same time each day helps to strengthen the body clock.

TRUE **FALSE**

Exercise just before bedtime will help you to sleep.

TRUE **FALSE**

If you can't sleep, stay in bed.

TRUE **FALSE**

Having TVs, computers, and gadgets in your room helps you to sleep.

TRUE **FALSE**

A really warm room will help you to sleep.

TRUE **FALSE**

Looking at social media at night will help you to sleep.

TRUE **FALSE**

Sleeping well is good for your mental health.

TRUE **FALSE**

Getting a good night's sleep improves your skin.

TRUE **FALSE**

Teenagers struggle to sleep.

TRUE **FALSE**

Poor sleep can have a negative affect on your physical health.

TRUE **FALSE**

Lack of sleep can affect your concentration and memory.

TRUE **FALSE**

6 hours of sleep a night is enough for a teenager.

TRUE **FALSE**

ANSWERS

You should eat a huge meal just before bed.
FALSE. It's not a good idea to have a big meal close to bedtime as the digestion of our food could keep us awake through the night.

Going to bed at the same time every day helps you to sleep well.
TRUE. It's a good idea to go to bed and get up at around the same time. This will strengthen your body clock and help you to be in a healthy sleep/wake pattern.

Getting up around the same time each day helps to strengthen the body clock.
TRUE. Getting up at a similar time each day will strengthen the body clock.

Exercise just before bedtime will help you to sleep.
FALSE. Exercise close to bedtime will actually wake us up, especially if it is more energetic cardio exercise (something like yoga would be okay close to bedtime). It is more helpful to exercise during the day, especially on a morning, outdoors if possible – this will help to wake up us up on a morning and set our body clock.

If you can't sleep, stay in bed.
FALSE. If you are finding it hard to sleep and you have not been able to fall asleep for 20 minutes or more, then it is a good idea to get up and do a quiet relaxing activity in dim light and return to bed when you feel tired. Staying in bed, tossing and turning trying to get off to sleep can make us feel more stressed and keep us awake for longer.

Having TVs, computers, and gadgets in your room helps you to sleep.
FALSE. It's best to not have any gadgets (including your phone) in your bedroom on a night. It's tempting to use our gadgets at night if they are available but being on devices will impact on our ability to fall asleep and to sleep well. Ideally, the bedroom should be a device free area!

A really warm room will help you to sleep.
FALSE. A room needs to be quite cool to aid sleep – around 17-18 degrees is the ideal temperature for a good night's sleep.

Looking at social media at night will help you to sleep.
FALSE. This is a big FALSE! Looking at social media at night is likely to not only keep us awake but could also increase our stress levels. This is due to the blue light from the screen that fools our brains and bodies in to thinking that it is time to be awake, stopping our production of the sleepy hormone, melatonin. Not only that, but often the content of what we are looking at on social media can be anxiety provoking or overly stimulating, again preventing us from sleeping well.

Sleeping well is good for your mental health.
TRUE. When we sleep well it really improves our mental health. We feel more resilient, we can manage our emotions and we can problem solve and think more rationally when we have had a really good night's sleep.

Getting a good night's sleep improves your skin.
TRUE. That's true! Sleeping well improves our health generally, resulting in clearer skin and a glowing complexion.

Teenagers struggle to sleep.
TRUE. Teenagers do struggle to sleep for a variety of reasons – firstly, our production of melatonin (the sleepy hormone) is delayed during the teenage years so we feel sleepy later on at night. Add to this lots of other factors that stop us from sleeping well such as the use of devices, drinking caffeinated drinks and energy drinks, and the general stresses of being a teen and we have a recipe for poor teen sleep.

Poor sleep can have a negative affect on your physical health.
TRUE. Poor sleep can impact on our physical health too as when we don't sleep well there is an impact on our immune system meaning that we are much more likely to pick up bugs and infections. Sleep deprivation is linked to diseases and illnesses such as cancer, cardiac problems, diabetes, mental health issues and dementia. Improving our sleep will really have a good impact on our health for the future too.

Lack of sleep can affect your concentration and memory.
TRUE. Sleeping well does improve our short term memory and concentration too.

6 hours of sleep a night is enough for a teenager.
FALSE. The average amount of sleep for a teenager is around 9 hours. This is an average so you may need a little more or a little less than this. If you wake up on a morning without the need for an alarm and you feel refreshed and ready for the day it is likely that you are getting the right amount of sleep.

For more information on teen sleep, visit https://teensleephub.org.uk/