



**Canterbury**

District Health Board

Te Pōari Hauora o Waitaha

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# Sleep Hygiene

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# Sleep

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## An active state

A lot to do with sleep still remains a mystery, however we do know that it plays an important role in:

- memory consolidation
- physical and mental health
- bolstering the immune system
- making us feel good!

Sleep is split up into multiple stages throughout the night. It is extremely important that we get adequate hours asleep so that we are able to achieve all stages, and feel good the next day!



# Lack of sleep...

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Poor cognition

Poor coordination

Lack of concentration

Poor memory

Irritability

Slower reaction times



# Sleep Hygiene

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Good day-time and night-time practices can help promote a quality sleep and daytime alertness.

Incorporates both behavioural and environmental factors that we are able to control ourselves so that sleep doesn't become a problem.

Although we can't control our body once we are asleep, there are many things we can do during the day to promote a healthy sleep.



# Get regular!

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Regular bed-time

Regular wake time

Adequate hours asleep

Often sleep is not a priority due to hectic lives and busy schedules.

# The bedroom setting

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The bed should only be used for sleeping – it is not a lounge!

Avoid watching television, using a mobile phone, reading, knitting, doing work etc. in bed.

Ensure the bedroom is a dark, quiet space and is cool in temperature.

Remove yourself from the bedroom to do a mundane task in a dimly lit environment if you are unable to sleep. Only return to bed once you are sleepy



# Have a relaxing bed routine

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Have a wind down time of around thirty minutes before bedtime

Do not take your worries to bed with you

Avoid using artificial lights at least thirty minutes prior to bedtime



# Things to avoid before sleep

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Caffeine

Nicotine

Alcohol





# Clock-watching

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Try not to clock watch

Remove the clock from the bedroom if this becomes a problem

If you need the clock for an alarm, turn the clock around so that you can not see the time



# Natural light

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If left free running, our circadian clock is approximately 25 hours long

We use light to synchronise our body which tells us when we should be awake and when we should be sleeping

Get as much natural light as possible during the daytime to help entrain your circadian clock



# Napping

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Sleeping during the day can make it harder to get to sleep at night

If you need to nap, try to limit it to around twenty to thirty minutes

Avoid napping late in the day if possible



# Diet and exercise

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Regular exercise can help promote a restful sleep

Avoid vigorous exercise too late in the evening as it can stimulate the body and make it difficult to fall asleep

Maintain a healthy diet

Do not have a heavy meal directly prior to bedtime

Do not go to bed on an empty stomach



# Finally...

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Sleep is just as important as the rest of our health and well being

To make the most out of our sleep it is imperative to be **consistent** with sleep hygiene approaches