

A guide to Sleep and Mental Health



Did you know?



33-44% of adults in Australia report having insufficient sleep



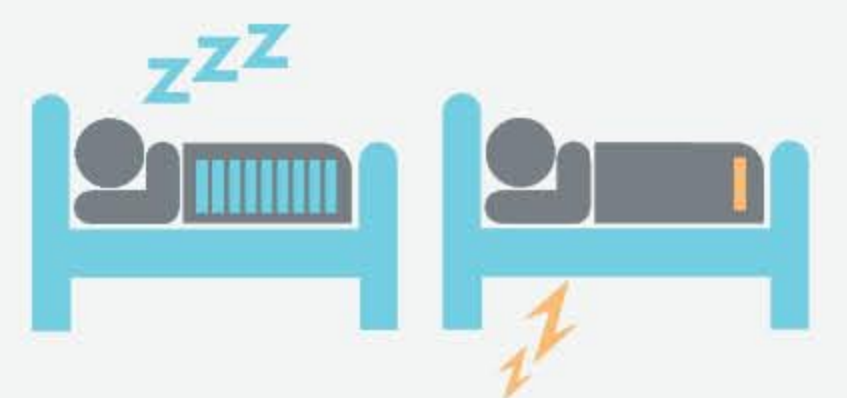
62% of children with ADHD in Australia have a sleep disorder



80% of people with Depression experience Insomnia

Studies show...

People who get less sleep than required often don't notice that their energy is lower than that of well rested people, which means sleep issues are more common than we think



Insomnia predicts Depression more than Depression predicts insomnia



People with OCD are more likely to respond to therapies if a sleep problem is addressed



Children today sleep 75 minutes less than 100 years ago



Sleep is as important to our health as diet, exercise, sanitation and other things we do to prevent illness

Your path to good mental health starts with good "sleep hygiene"

1. Appreciate what a good night's sleep can do

HELPS OUR MEMORY

Lack of sleep affects our long-term and short-term memories. During sleep our body is able to process memories.

PREVENTS MOOD SWINGS

Overemotional feelings and moodiness is linked to sleep deprivation. Long-term sleep deprivation can lead to anxiety and depression.

RESTORES AND REPAIRS

The hormones produced in sleep help to repair cells. Without sleep there are not enough cells to repair the body and weakens immune system.

WHAT A SLEEPY BRAIN LOOKS LIKE...

When we do EEG recordings of people with Depression or ADHD, we often find "beta spindles" in daytime brain activity which indicate "sleepiness"



HELPS OUR CONCENTRATION

Our motivation and energy is reduced when we have not slept enough the night before.

HAPPIER RELATIONSHIPS

Being tired can affect relationships and reduce intimacy.

IMPROVES BEHAVIOUR

Lack of sleep in children often causes irritation, lashing out, boredom, lack of focus, learning difficulties.

ALLOWS US TO LEARN

Processing information and learning takes place during sleep. Everything children learn at school gets stored in their brains, which makes them remember it better.

2. Understand the effects of blue light on the body's internal clock

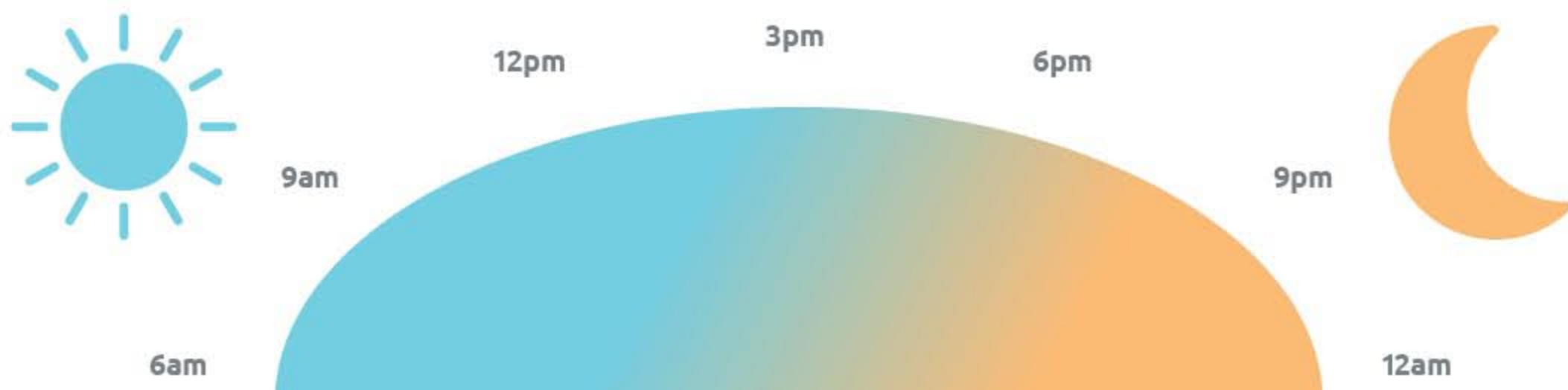
Smartphones, tablets, laptops, computers, LED and fluorescent light bulbs emit a high spectrum blue light the body more naturally needs during daylight hours.



TIPS TO AVOID BLUE LIGHT AT NIGHT

- Set dimming functions on your devices
- If it is hard to change your environment, consider blue light blocking glasses
- Replace LED and Fluorescent lights in your home with warmer spectrum light sources

In the morning exposure to blue spectrum light from the sun helps to calibrate the body's internal "circadian" clock, thereby making it easier to fall asleep that night.



In the evenings our eyes need to avoid blue light to give our bodies the signal it is night time and therefore the time to wind down and fall asleep.

3. Allow your body to prepare for sleep naturally

KEEP A ROUTINE
The body "gets used" to falling asleep at certain times, try get your body into a healthy routine and stick to it. On weekends, the time you wake up shouldn't differ more than 1.5 hours from your regular wake up times during the week.

UNDERSTAND THE EFFECTS OF CAFFEINE
Coffee, tea, cola, may other soft drinks and also chocolate contain caffeine. Your body will find it more difficult to fall asleep if there is caffeine in your system 4 - 6 hours before bedtime.

UNDERSTAND THE EFFECTS OF ALCOHOL
Many people believe alcohol helps them fall asleep, however, a few hours later when the alcohol levels in your blood start to fall, there can be a stimulant or wake-up effect, disrupting your circadian rhythm.

BE MINDFUL OF "SCREEN TIME"
Try replace "Screen time" with different activities: reading a book, yoga, relaxing to music. Consider blue light blocking glasses, or dimming the light of the screen to warmer colours if you do watch something on a screen.

EXERCISE DURING THE DAY
Regular cardiovascular exercise during the day, particularly in the morning or early afternoon, can help deepen sleep. It is not recommended to exercise within the 2 hours before bedtime.

AVOID NAPPING DURING THE DAY
If you take regular or long naps throughout the day, it will make it harder to fall asleep at night, because you will not have worked up enough "sleep pressure" or tiredness.

NATURAL SLEEP VS. SEDATION
Sleeping pills induce sedation rather than natural sleep. Sedation can disrupt our natural circadian rhythm, which in turn affects mood, attention and many other negative symptoms in mental health.

CHECK WITH YOUR GP
If you feel any of your prescribed medications are preventing you from falling asleep naturally. Ask about Melatonin supplementation if necessary.

4. Give your body the sleep it needs



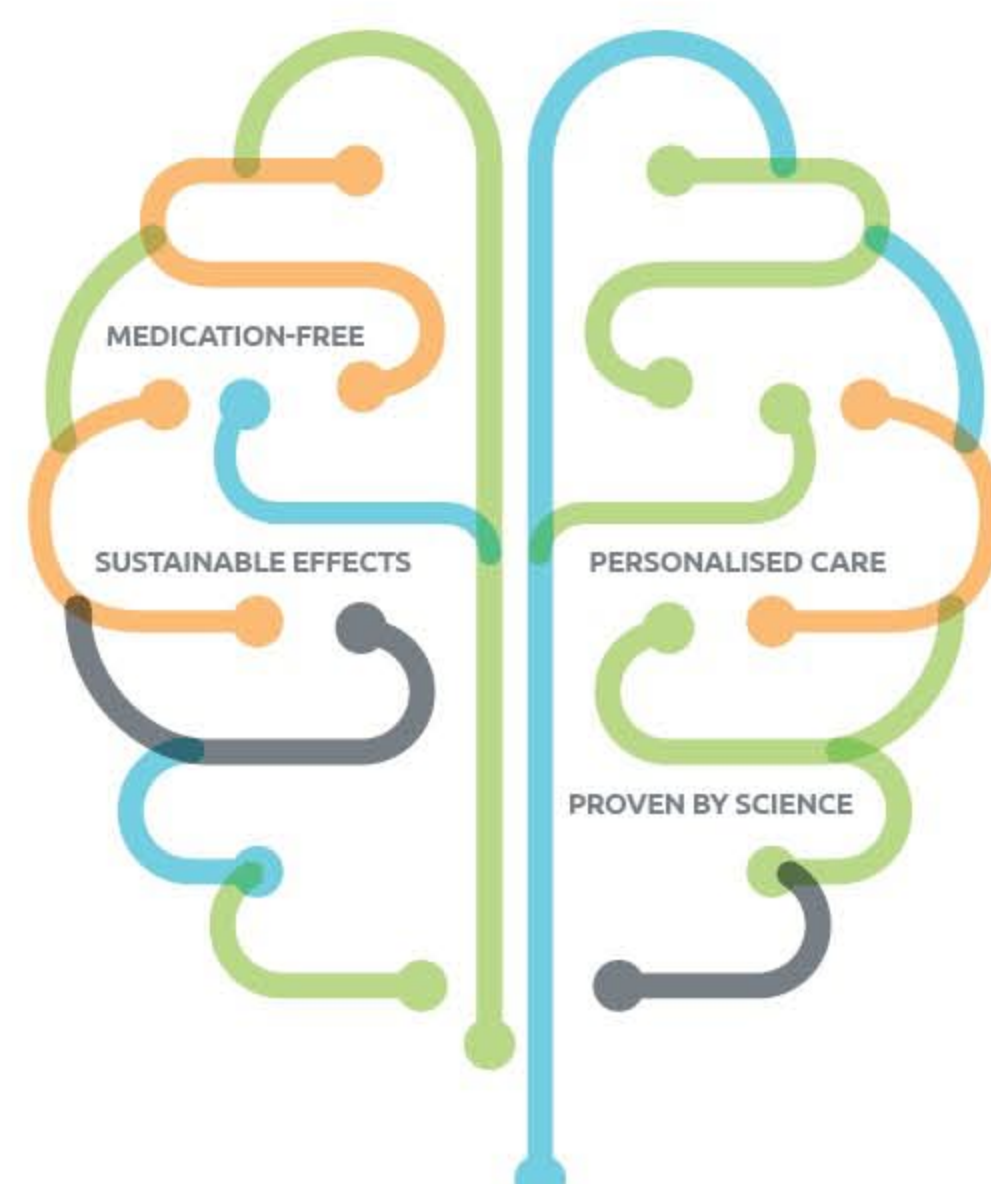
- Create an environment for sleep. Keep your bedroom cool, dark and quiet.
- Sleep in bed and not on the couch
- Reserve your bedroom for sleeping and intimacy if possible, keep your workspace away from your bed
- Do not look at the alarm clock, if possible keep clocks out of the bedroom

SLEEPING TIME GUIDELINE



A global network of clinics promoting only evidence-based, medication-free alternatives in mental health.

www.neurocaregroup.com



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