

Exercise 35 - Sleep Hygiene Factors

To sleep well we need to get the basics right. “Sleep Hygiene” is the basics of a good night’s sleep and means the things we do in the day and at bedtime to prepare ourselves for a restful night’s sleep.

The following exercise looks at “lifestyle factors”, the things we do in the day to put our bodies and minds in the right position to sleep well. The factors that have the most marked impact on our ability to sleep well include caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, exposure to daylight, the amount of exercise we take, relaxation time, bed comfort, noise, light and temperature. The following exercise can help to identify and record what you are doing now and anything you may need to change to improve your pattern of consistent and restful sleep. You can find out more about how CBT is used to manage insomnia and other sleep problems by visiting www.thinkcbt.com/sleepwell.

Sleep Hygiene Factor	What I Do Now	What I Want to Change
How do you wind down for bed? A good wind-down routine includes relaxing activities and avoids caffeine, alcohol and nicotine.		
Screens can keep us awake – do you avoid staring at screen before bedtime?		
Do you get exercise during the day? Exercise just before bedtime should be avoided but, exercise during the day can help us feel rested and ready for sleep.		
Do you get daylight in the morning and have the lights dimmed in the evening? This can help set our body clock to know when it should be getting ready to sleep.		

Sleep Hygiene Factor	What I Do Now	What I Want to Change
Do you only go to sleep when tired? This will maximise the chance of your going to sleep and staying asleep.		
Bed is best kept for sleep and intimacy – are there things that happen in the bedroom that could happen elsewhere?		
Do you clock-watch? Paying too much attention to what time it is can make you worry and can keep you awake.		
Are you comfortable in bed? A comfortable bed and a quiet, tidy, dark, cool bedroom can help us sleep well.		
Do you lay in bed awake at night? If you are struggling to get to sleep or back to sleep, try getting out of bed until you are feeling sleepy again so that your mind connects your bed with sleep.		