

Sleep



We spend approximately a third of our lives asleep. Sleep is an essential and involuntary process, without which we cannot function effectively. It is as essential to our bodies as eating, drinking and breathing, and is vital for maintaining good mental and physical health. Sleeping helps to repair and restore our brains, not just our bodies.

What can cause sleep problems?

Many different things that can affect our sleep. They include:

- **stress** or worry
- a change in the noise level or temperature of your bedroom
- a different routine, for example, because of jet lag
- too much caffeine or **alcohol**
- shift work
- **physical** or mental health problems
- side effects of **medicines**



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY

How can mental health problems affect sleep?

Mental health problems can affect your sleep in different ways.

- **Anxiety** can cause your thoughts to race, which can make it hard to sleep
- **Depression** can lead to oversleeping: sleeping late or a lot during the day. It can also cause insomnia if you have troubling thoughts
- **Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)** can cause nightmares or night terrors. These may wake you up and/or make you feel anxious about falling asleep
- **Mania** can make you feel elated or energetic, so you might not feel tired or want to sleep. You may also have racing thoughts that make it hard to sleep
- **Medication** can have side effects, including insomnia, nightmares or oversleeping. Coming off medication can also cause sleep problems

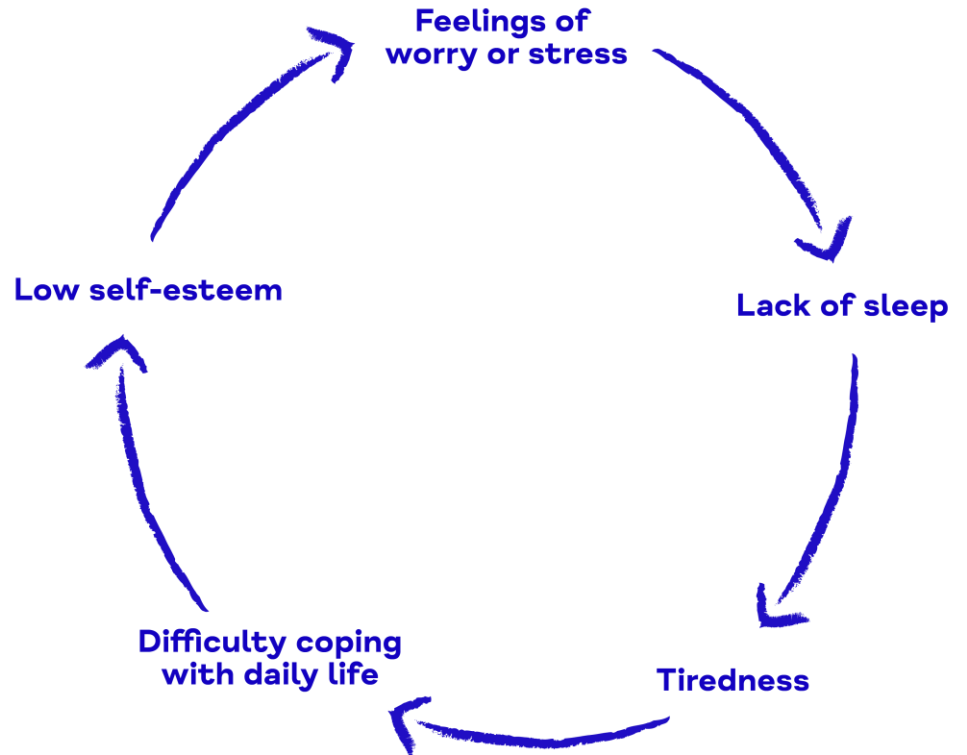
How can I improve my sleep?

There are many things you can try to help yourself sleep well.

- Establish a regular, relaxing bedtime routine that lets you unwind and sends a signal to your brain that it's time to sleep
- Create a restful environment: bedrooms that are dark, cool and quiet are generally easier to fall asleep and stay asleep in
- Try to go to sleep and wake up at the same time each day
- Exercise regularly but avoid vigorous exercise near bedtime if it affects your sleep
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol before bed. They can stop you from falling asleep and prevent deep sleep
- Only use your bed for sleep or sex. Unlike most physical activity, sex makes us sleepy
- Try apps and online programmes designed to help with sleep problems, such as Pzizz, **Sleepio** or **Sleepstation**
- Avoid using screens in the evening, including on smartphones and tablets. The light from the screen can have a negative effect on sleep, and social media, news and games can all stimulate your brain and make you feel anxious
- Write down your worries if you lie awake worrying about tomorrow. This can help put your mind at rest
- If you can't sleep, don't worry about it. Get up and do something relaxing like listening to music or reading until you feel sleepy

How does sleep relate to mental health?

There's a close relationship between sleep and mental health. Living with a mental health problem can affect how well you sleep, and poor sleep can have a negative impact on your mental health.



If you are experiencing issues with sleep that are impacting on your daily life and your ability to function, you may wish to seek help from your GP.



Resources for help and information if you are experiencing sleep problems:

www.sleepcouncil.org.uk

www.sleepfoundation.org

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-health-issues/sleep/>

Contact Us

Company Name

Company Name

Street Address

Street Address

City, ST Zip Code

City, ST Zip Code

Phone

Phone

Email

Email

Website

Website
