



Sleep Advice for Teenagers in Care Let's talk about sleep.....

Sleep is an essential part of feeling well and happy. Almost everyone experiences problems with sleeping at some time in their life - especially during times when you are feeling emotionally overwhelmed. Anxiety, relentless replaying of the day's events, and heightened emotions may significantly interfere with your sleep. There are no hard and fast rules about how much sleep you should get each night – but you should get enough to ensure you don't wake up feeling exhausted all the time.

What can I do to sleep better?.....

We all know it's important to take a healthy approach to eating and exercise, but did you know it's also important to take a healthy approach to sleeping? Making sure you have good "sleep hygiene" is the first and often best way to get your sleep back on track and feel better. It can take a bit of time to get problematic sleep under control – there are no magical overnight fixes – but stick with the rules of good sleep hygiene and you can get your sleep back on track.

The "Do's and Don'ts" of good sleep.....

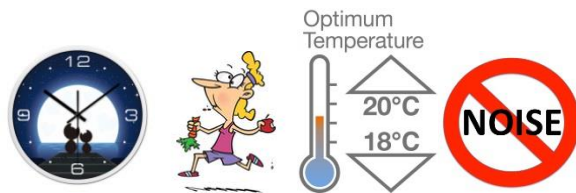
Do:

- * Go to bed at roughly the same time each day
- * Get up from bed at roughly the same time each day
- * Get regular exercise each day, preferably in the morning
- * Get regular exposure to outdoor or bright lights during the day
- * Keep lights less bright in the evening and the bedroom dark at night
- * Keep the temperature in your bedroom comfortable (not too hot or cold)
- * Keep the bedroom quiet – try thicker curtains, sleeping in a room away from the noisy areas where you are living or even ear plugs
- * Find a bedtime routine that works for you, and stick to it. For example; try taking a warm bath, dimming the lights in your room and listening to relaxing music (there are free phone

apps you can download for this) before you climb into bed

* Try sipping a soothing drink such as camomile tea as part of your bed routine
* Try a few drops of lavender oil on your pillow to create a soothing smell in your room * Keep your feet and hands warm with socks and/or gloves

* If you lie in bed awake for more than 30 minutes, get up and go to a different room or different part of the bedroom. Keep the lights dim and participate in a quiet activity (reading, drawing, listening to calming noises). Return to bed when you feel sleepy. Do this as many times during the night as needed



The “Do’s and Don’ts” of good sleep.....continued.

Don't:

- * Exercise just before going to bed
- * Engage in stimulating activity in the hour before you go to bed – this includes using anything that has a screen (such as a computer, television, laptop or Smartphone)
- * Sit in bed and watch television or use a computer, laptop or Smartphone
- * Have caffeine in the late afternoon or evening (coffee, teas, Coca-Cola,

chocolate etc.)

- * Use alcohol to sleep (it may make you drowsy but you'll sleep really badly)
- * Smoke before going to bed – nicotine is a stimulant and will keep you awake
- * Go to bed too hungry or too full
- * Take another person's sleeping pills – this is really dangerous
- * Take daytime naps or doze off in front of the TV in the evening – keep yourself awake with something stimulating until bedtime or you risk resetting your body clock
- * Command yourself to go to sleep. This only makes your mind and body more alert.

Not working? What next?

If you have tried following the “do's and don'ts” above for at least a month and not seen any improvement please ask for some more help from ;

- Your GP
- Your counsellor or therapist • The LAC health team



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Reference: This leaflet has been adapted from materials produced by the University of Southampton, University Health Service.

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