

Active Wellbeing

Bedtime Routine



A bedtime routine can help you deal with insomnia in several ways:

If your mind is very active when you go to bed, a routine can help calm it down before you get into bed. The time in bed is sometimes the only quiet thinking time we allow ourselves. Thinking can keep you awake though, so it's better to do it beforehand.

By repeating a regular pattern, you condition your body and mind to realise that it's time to go to sleep.

Top tips for a bedtime routine:

- **Keep Regular Hours**
Going to bed and getting up at roughly the same time every day will programme your body to sleep better
- **Create a restful sleeping environment**
Temperature, lighting and noise should be controlled so that the bedroom environment helps you to fall (and stay) asleep.
- **Make sure your bed is comfortable**
- **Switch off the electronic devices**
It's a good idea not to use them during the hour before going to sleep for 4 reasons:
 - They stimulate your brain.
 - The light some devices emit can interfere with your internal body clock.
 - They can be addictive, eating into even more sleep time.
 - Checking work emails at night can create worry and stress.
- **Relaxation exercises: meditation, breathing & mindfulness**
- **Listen to music**
Whilst it's important to avoid screens, listening to music before bed is a great idea. Preferably not music which is too exciting or emotional though.
- **Bring your temperature down**
Have a shower 15-30 minutes before bed, preferably a cool shower. If you have a hot bath, make sure it's between 1 and 2 hours before bed. It takes a long time for the body to cool down after a bath.
- **Less caffeine**
They interfere with the process of falling asleep, and they prevent deep sleep.
- **Don't overindulge**
- **Write away your worries**
- **Essential: don't lie awake for hours – get up and repeat**
The key is to get up, go into another room, have dim lighting only and repeat some of your routine. After 15 minutes you can then go back to bed and try to fall asleep again.

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Example of Bedtime Routine

This should last for 30 minutes to an hour but this depends entirely on you and what suits you.

Here is an example of a bedtime routine:

Time	Activity	What trying to achieve
22:00 – 22:20	Watch some TV/adult colouring book	Calm and relax the body in order to wind down
22:20 – 22:30	Take a cool shower/bath	Using senses and cooling body down before bed
22:30 – 22:40	Make and drink camomile tea whilst check phone/writing to-do list for the following day	Camomile tea helps to relax the body**
22:40 – 22:50	Write notes on thoughts/feelings from the day	By doing this you are helping to transfer what is running through your mind and reflecting
22:50 – 23:00	Turn light off. Calming music/podcast on phone for 10 minutes	By turning off the light you are allowing your senses to adjust to the environment and music or podcast can help relax the body
23:00	Turn everything off and close your eyes	

** Decaffeinated tea can also be used or fruit teas that do not contain caffeine. If you don't like any then a cup of warm water can be used as a substitute.

Please note: If your routine does not work after 30 minutes then **DO NOT** just lie there but ensure you get up and start from half way through your routine. Lying in bed thinking about falling asleep will not help you fall asleep. Check you are not too hot as this can affect sleep. Try not to stimulate your mind too much therefore staying off electronics as much as possible is preferable.

If you have a partner then it may be beneficial to talk about what you are thinking or feeling at the time to also get it off your chest if writing it down does not help.

Other Activities you may use:

- Meditation
- Relaxation breathing techniques
- Read a book for personal pleasure not for academic reasons
- Playing music/writing music
- Computer game instead of TV
- Socialise with house mates
- Use lavender oil/ spray on pillow- calming scent.