



ASD and ADHD Sleep Resources

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Sleeping well is just as important for our health as eating a good diet and being active. We all have periods when we find it difficult to sleep, and when this happens occasionally, we don't need to worry too much. But long-term sleep issues can influence our mental and physical health

Getting to sleep and staying asleep can be difficult for those that are neurodivergent.

Sleep is important for:

- Recovery & Repair

Sleep helps our bodies and our minds to recover from the day and prepare for tomorrow. Too little sleep and those tomorrows will be tougher.

- Focus

Scientists have shown that having a good sleep will help you concentrate during the day and also helps your brain to organise and store the information you have learned during the day. Clever.

- It helps to promote a healthy mind

Scientists have found that there's a strong relationship between getting enough sleep and feeling well and happy. Not getting enough sleep can cause low mood and even make depression and anxiety worse.

What is needed for a good night's sleep:

- Stick to a routine

Ideally, a sleep routine should be the same every day, including weekends

Having a regular routine helps to improve sleep. It's sometimes called sleep hygiene.

A good sleep routine should include having a set time to start winding down – and a way to relax is important too.

Going to bed and getting up at fixed times is another good sleep habit.

- Try to Relax

Remember, your sleep routine starts before you get into bed, so build in time every evening to relax.

Avoid electronic devices at least an hour before bed, as mobiles, tablets and computers all throw out blue light that stops sleep.

Reading, listening to soft music or a podcast, or sleep meditation/mindfulness can all help if you have trouble sleeping.

- Make Yourself a sleepy space



Make sure your bedroom is as dark and comfortable as possible. Blackout blinds or an eye mask can help if there are things like unwanted light that may disturb your sleep. Make sure the temperature is right and you are not too hot or too cold. Silence is golden when it comes to sleep for many of us, so wearing earplugs, putting your phone on silent (or out of the room entirely) can keep things quiet.

- Improve sleep through diet and exercise

A good diet and regular physical exercise can help us to relax and get better sleep. And the opposite is also true: an unhealthy diet and lack of exercise can stop us from sleeping well.

Avoid eating large meals close to bedtime. Try to also ditch the bedtime caffeine (like coffee), alcohol or nicotine if you can, because these are stimulants that make us more alert.

Regular exercise helps with sleep but avoid anything too energetic in the 90 minutes before bedtime if you find it stops you from sleeping.

Worried you're not getting enough sleep?

Everyone has the odd night here and there where they don't sleep well, or when they find themselves struggling to drift off. But if you're regularly not sleeping well (most nights) for a long period of time (more than two weeks), you're struggling to get up in the morning and feeling tired during the day as a result, then it's time to talk to someone about it. You should also think about seeing your GP to make sure that everything is OK and to see if they might be able to help put it right.

There are a range of resources and websites that can provide further support and information: -

The Sleep Charity Home - Home - The Sleep Charity

*The National Sleep Helpline 03303 530 541 Monday – Thursday | 9am – 11am
Monday, Tuesday & Thursday | 7pm – 9pm*

The Teen sleep Hub- Home - Teen Sleep Hub

NHS UK Bedtime meditation video - NHS