



SLEEP AND COGNITIVE FUNCTION



Sleep is essential for children and young people because it plays an important role in physical and mental development.

Getting better sleep can have a positive impact on all aspects of your life. From helping the brain retain information (great for memory and revision!) to helping us to look better (think clearer skin and shinier hair) and to perform better at sports, plus it also helps with your overall mental health.

In all, getting good sleep makes everything better.

HOW MUCH SLEEP DO YOU NEED?

Everyone needs different amounts of sleep, but the NHS recommends an average of:

- 7 to 9 hours for adults
- 9 to 13 hours for children

If you find that you always feel tired through the day, you are probably not getting enough sleep and should think about how you can improve your sleeping habits.



WHAT CAN HELP - SLEEP TIPS

- Is your sleep routine working for you? Bedtime routines aren't just for small children. Teenagers – and even adults – benefit from a regular routine. Getting to bed at the same time each night and winding down in the hour before bed are key to helping your routine.
- You could use a sleep tracker to get to know your sleep pattern better.
- Avoiding caffeine and energy drinks, especially in the afternoon and evening.
- Screen activity too close to bedtime interferes with your sleep, making it harder to fall asleep and leaving you feeling less than fresh the next day.
- Run out of time to sleep? It's no surprise that happens when you've fitted in schoolwork, exercising, chores and chatting with family and friends. Something has to give and it's usually your sleep. But did you know that actually getting a good night's sleep will make you better at all of the above?
- Keeping your bedroom cool, dark, and quiet will also help.

WHEN TO SEEK HELP

Teens who are having sleep problems should start by talking with their doctor about how much sleep they are getting and how it impacts their daily life. Their GP can work to identify any underlying causes and craft the most appropriate and tailored treatment if needed.

Depending on the cause of sleep problems, medications may be considered; however, in most cases, treatment with medications isn't necessary for teens to get better sleep.