

"This is an excellent programme and is jam-packed full of useful information. I love how it covers such a broad range of topics. It's about so much more than just sleep but also assists in adopting a healthier lifestyle plus mindfulness, all of which is so important in today's busy, stressful environment" - BECKY SANSOM

# 1 Week to a More Restful Sleep Programme



**BY KIRSTEN TAYLOR  
NATUROPATHIC SLEEP SPECIALIST  
HOLISTIC SLEEP COACH  
AND SLEEPDROPS FOUNDER**



## Welcome!

Congratulations on being the amazing self-honouring person you clearly are! Making the decision to invest in your health in this way can only reap positive results for you.

I am so excited you are reading this fantastic content. In only 1 week you can be a new, more rested you. I've been coaching people to have more amazing lives through better sleep for over 17 years and I am still surprised and in awe of the healing powers of sleep.

In my opinion, sleep is quite simply the coolest thing we can do for our mind, body, soul and whole life!

Over the next 7 days and nights I will coach you to take control of your sleep, give you information, skills and powerful yet gentle tools that have been proven to help you get better sleep than you probably thought possible.

I have done all the hard work for you. Please simply follow along with the nightly activities, complete your assessments, write in your journal, listen to my meditations, breathe and follow my advice during the day. I really can help you if you work with me.

I am thrilled you have taken this step towards your total well-being and I am with you all the way.

*Kirsten*

Kirsten Taylor  
Naturopath, Medical Herbalist,  
Nutritionist, Holistic Sleep Coach,  
Founder of Award Winning SleepDrops

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# Introduction to the 1 Week to Restful Sleep Programme

## Let's get straight into it!

Your first night of my '1 Week to a More Restful Sleep Programme' is tonight. Starting tonight and each and every night you will receive information, tools and techniques for you to implement that will improve your ability to unwind, relax and achieve more restful sleep. I want you to feel empowered and prepared with steps that you can action immediately. This is all about you being able to take control of your health through better sleep!

Did you know that there are over 80 medically recognised reasons why people are not sleeping well? To keep it as simple as possible I have broken it down into three key points that can aid you in understanding your sleeping issues. The 3 key points to consider are:

1. Having trouble falling asleep – Struggling to switch off at night. Your body and mind just keeps ticking away when all that you want to do is sleep.
2. Having trouble staying asleep during the night – Are you waking up frequently because of kids, pets, sounds, temperature, partner's movements or snoring, lack of comfort, for the bathroom or even for no reason at all?
3. Waking up too early or unrefreshed in the morning – this can affect your whole day. The circadian rhythm (your body clock) is a 24-hour process, so how you feel during the day will impact the way you sleep at night and vice versa.

Now you are ready to do your Sleep Assessment which will highlight your specific sleep needs. This sleep assessment will score your ability to fall asleep, stay asleep and wake up and go about your day. It is important to get a gauge on how serious your sleep issues are for you and whether you can manage things yourself with the tools you will get on this programme or whether you need more comprehensive expert help. Don't worry either way because this programme comes with a professional consultation.



# 01

## **Night 1: Self Sleep Assessment & Sleep Score**

**A** sleep assessment is an easy way for you to get a benchmark for where you are now. Keep a record each morning as you make small improvements from the night before.

It will also help you to get a better understanding of the sleep issues affecting you which you can share in your 15-minute FREE consult with our professional support team.

As you go through the questions, don't overthink it, just choose the one that MOST represents your sleep experience.

# 01

Circle the most correct answer to find out your sleep score

1. Do you consider that you have trouble going to sleep?

Yes (3) Sometimes (2) No (1)

2. Do you consider that you have trouble staying asleep?

Yes (3) Sometimes (2) No (1)

3. On average how long does it take you to get to sleep from the time that you try to go to sleep?

30 minutes or more (3)  
15-30 minutes (2)  
Less than 15 minutes (1)

4. Do you have a relaxation wind down routine that you follow in preparation for bed?

No (3) Sometimes (2) Yes (1)

5. How long before you turn out the light do you stop interacting with a computer or phone?

0-20 minutes (3)  
20- 40 minutes (2)  
40 minutes to 1 hour (1)

Add up your score from each question in this column here

Sub total = \_\_\_\_\_

## Sleep Assessment

6. What time do you go to sleep?

12am or later (3)  
Between 10:30pm - 12am (2)  
10:30pm or earlier (1)

7. Do you sleep all through the night?

No (3) Sometimes (2) Yes (1)

8. How many nights per week do you wake up in the night?

4-7 nights per week (3)  
1-4 nights per week (2)  
0-1 nights per week (1)

9. How many times per night do you wake up on average?

5 times or more per night (3)  
1-4 times per night (2)  
0-1 times per night (1)

10. Do you snore, twitch or jerk yourself awake?

Yes (3) Sometimes (2) No (1)

11. When you wake up in the morning do you awake refreshed?

No (3) Sometimes (2) Yes (1)

12. Do you experience stress in your day?

Yes (3) Sometimes (2) No (1)

Sub total = \_\_\_\_\_

Add the sub totals together to get your

Total Sleep Score Here = \_\_\_\_\_

# 01

## Discovering Your Sleep Score

### If you scored between 1 and 13

It is really great you have recognised just how important your sleep is. Prioritising your sleep makes a huge difference to your sleep success and overall well-being. This week will give you an opportunity to fine-tune your sleep knowledge & skills & by using proven techniques you will take your sleep up another level. I invite you to embrace strategies to support you from night 1.

*"Okay so now you have a baseline to work from and together we can start improving your sleep starting right now. Each day and night of new behaviours and dedication to improving your health and sleep will add up to momentous results. Remember it took time for your body to get out of balance and it will take a little time to get you back on track. I'll be here to help you".*

*Kirsten*

### If you scored between 14 and 27

Your body is sending you signals that it needs support. Sleep is 1/3 of a 24 hour period that needs to balance day & night. If you're getting poor sleep during the night then you'll also see the consequences during the day. This programme will help you understand the parts of your day & night that you can work on & give you great tools to assist your sleep & support your day.

### If you scored between 28 and 39

Your whole body needs some additional support to feel good and get great quality sleep. It is time to take your sleep seriously. I am glad you are here doing this! Sleep is the foundation for all health and well-being. To get you back on track make sure you take time to find what works for your body and mind during the next 7 days.

# Night 1:

## 22 Tips for improving Sleep Hygiene & Sleeping Better



Sleep Hygiene is referred to as the behaviours and actions that encourage sleepiness.

The following 22 Tips are known to improve Sleep Hygiene and therefore sleep.

At the end of this comprehensive list, I am going to ask you to implement 3 things immediately tonight, so as you are reading through have a think about what would be easy to action and write them down on page 12.

### **1. Consume caffeine sensibly**

Both coffee and tea have valuable nutritional qualities (e.g. antioxidants). However, due to their stimulatory nature, it's advisable to limit consumption to 1-2 cups per day and not to consume after 2.00 pm. It can take up to 9 hours for caffeine to be processed by your body.

As an alternative consider drinking decaffeinated coffee or caffeine-free herbal teas or pure water throughout the day & especially before bed.

### **2. Set an alarm**

Set your alarm to alert you one hour before the time that you would like to be asleep. For example, if you wish to be asleep by 10 pm set your alarm to alert you at 9 pm that it's time to start winding down.

### **3. Develop a regular sleep routine**

Go to bed at the same time each night and get up at the same time each morning - 8 hours later. Even during the weekend try to keep a regular sleeping pattern. Have a wind-down period before bed with no stimulating activities involving the TV, computer, electrical device or intense physical activity. This is your time to unwind and relax. I will be helping you to create a wind-down routine on night three.





#### 4. Reduce stress

Stress is such a BIG contributor to insomnia. I have dedicated Night 4 to make sure you know more about this sleep interrupter and a potential killer.

Cortisol, a stress hormone, is stimulating by its very nature and can have a serious impact on your ability to fall asleep and stay asleep. Do all that you can to mitigate the stress in your life.

Reduce cortisol with these tips:

- Make sure you are in bed by 9:30pm with the lights out by 10pm to avoid a cortisol surge.
- Relaxation techniques such as deep breathing, yoga, mindfulness, meditation, listening to soothing music.
- Regular exercise.
- Having fun, incorporating things you enjoy in your daily life creates a positive mood which has been linked with lower cortisol.

*If you find you become energized or get a "second wind" later in the night and find yourself wide awake until 1 am or you go to sleep and wake again an hour or 2 later – high cortisol may be an issue for you.*

## "I have found that small steps add up to a treasured journey"

- Kirsten Taylor, Naturopathic Sleep Specialist

#### 5. Stop interacting with your technology before bed

It has been scientifically proven that interactions such as emailing, texting, Facebooking can delay sleep onset by up to 1.5 hours. Avoid 'screens' of any kind at least 1 hour before you want to go to sleep.

It's okay to use your phone as a music player or to play the guided meditations that I have provided in this programme.

Be sure to set your phone to do not disturb before doing so.



### **6. Make sure you are tired**

Do some exercise during the day. If you can only exercise at night it may impact on your ability to sleep. Be mindful of what times you exercise. Invigorating exercise should be avoided within four hours of sleep.

### **7. Wash your worries away**

A warm bath helps your muscles relax. Research has shown a hot bath or shower half an hour before bed helps bring about a change in your body temperature which is needed to fall asleep. Try adding Epsom Salts (rich in magnesium) to your bath for soothing and relaxing your muscles. See my resource section for sources.

### **8. Minerals and nutrition for relaxation**

Mineral deficiencies are a leading cause of sleep disturbances. Minerals are lacking in our modern food chain. Specific minerals taken before bed can have a positive impact on naturally sedating the nervous system. I go into more detail about this on night six.

### **9. Darken your room**

Sleeping in complete darkness promotes the production of Melatonin and encourages your brain to switch off and fall asleep. Try blackout curtains, closing your bedroom door and wearing a mulberry silk eye mask that is soft on your skin but blocks out all light.

### **10. Breathing techniques**

Deep slow breathing can reset your nervous system and induce a state of relaxation which will enable you to get to sleep. Breath is so powerful to enable sleep. I've included two guided meditations using breath in this programme. On night one, I will teach you how to use your breath in a guided meditation. On night four, I will teach you how to control your breath and scan your body to relax.

### **11. Go to the bathroom before bed**

A full bladder is a common reason people wake during the night. Make sure to go to the bathroom before getting into bed for sleep.

If you do need to use the bathroom during the night, and it safe to do so try to avoid turning on any lights so as to not wake yourself up too much. Make sure you consider if leaving the light off is a safe option for you.

## **Deep slow breathing can reset your nervous system and induce relaxation**

### **12. Avoid alcohol**

Don't use alcohol as a sedative to get you to sleep. Despite common belief, it does not promote good quality sleep. It causes "micro wakings" or small interruptions throughout the night, so you may not even be aware. When one drinks alcohol you often don't get the full phases of sleep and it can cause people to wake up between 1.00 am and 3.00 am which according to Chinese medicine is 'Liver' time or the time the liver is most active. You are basically just giving it more work to do. Also, alcohol depletes the body of vital magnesium which is needed for good sleep.

### **13. Nighttime snack**

A small nighttime snack may help you to sleep but only if it contains naturally relaxing foods such as Turkey, bananas and almonds because they contain Tryptophan which is a "feel good" neurotransmitter and a natural tranquilliser that has a role in sleep. For more information on the important role, nutrition plays in sleep see night six. If I am hungry before bed then I snack on turkey on crackers.

#### 14. Avoid all recreational drugs

No matter what! Drugs of any kind change brain waves and interfere with sleep quality.

#### 15. Prepare for tomorrow

Check your schedule as you finish work for the day so you are not wondering if you have forgotten anything for the next workday. Make a list of everything you need to do the next day. Keep a notebook by the bed in case you get ideas that need to be remembered. Write them down and then forget about them until tomorrow.

#### 16. Temperature regulation

Make sure you are not too cold or too hot. Be sure to wear wool next to your body in winter to keep your body warm and cotton in summer as cotton draws heat from the body. If you do wake too hot or too cold, do something about it straight away.

#### 17. Don't keep an LED alarm clock next to your bed

LED alarm clocks and other devices in your bedroom use bright lights which may interfere with Melatonin production stop your body from sleeping properly. If you must have an alarm clock, set it and put it into a drawer where you can't see the light.

#### 18. Reduce outside noise

Use noise-cancelling earplugs to reduce outside noise. Use soft earplugs to be comfortable. If you are sensitive to noise you will most likely respond to some specific forms of magnesium supplementation before bed. Tinnitus or ringing in the ears often responds to specific forms of magnesium supplementation too.

#### 19. Listen to relaxing music

Relaxing music, guided meditation or self-hypnosis can help encourage you to go to sleep. These are highly effective for many people. But make sure you turn the music off once you are finished. Have an easy turn off system such as only having to push one button or shut down your smartphone.

#### 20. Do not fall asleep with the TV on

Blue light from your TV can interfere with melatonin production and stop you from reaching the full phases of sleep. Please switch it off before going to sleep.

### Easy solution:

**Keep a note book & pen by the bed in case you get ideas that need to be remembered**

#### 21. Snooze control

Make snooze control rules. There is no point in hitting the snooze button every 5 or 10 minutes for an hour in the morning. Give yourself no more than 3 chances to hit snooze and then that's it – go start your day!

#### 22. Light exposure

To regulate your sleep-wake cycle, make sure you see some sunlight in the morning. This will signal your brain that it is day time and assist in the regulation of your circadian rhythm (day-night cycle).



# 3 things to action immediately

You have just read 22 of my top suggestions for getting better sleep. It's most likely too many tips to action in one night!

Don't put pressure on yourself. Please select 3 tips to implement tonight.

You can implement other tips as the programme progresses to create a new sleep routine for you to keep going forward. I will give you more information on this on night three.

The main point is your body loves and responds to routine.

Select 3 that you know you are already doing or can commit to actioning each night for the next week.

Night 1

Write down your 3 sleep tips that you are going to action tonight:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Other changes to action each night this week:

Night 2

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Night 3

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Night 4

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Night 5

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Night 6

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Night 7

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Total changes implemented** \_\_\_\_\_

**Go You!!!**

# Guided Sleep Meditation

Have you listened to a guided sleep meditation before? I listen to guided meditations nearly every night to help myself relax and go to sleep.

Meditation is a completely non-religious practice and has been widely researched and practised for thousands of years. According to the evidence, meditation has very beneficial effects on the body and mind.

Research shows mindfulness meditation and guided meditation can improve the quality of sleep for individuals with sleeping difficulties, moderate sleep disturbance, daytime fatigue, depression, anxiety, stress and fatigue!

Meditation also increases happiness. Several studies have proven the inner state of happiness can actually be measured! Studies show there is a 50% increase in Serotonin after just 20 minutes of meditation - Serotonin is our happiness hormone and plays an important role in sleep and mental health.

I have created 2 meditations for you to enjoy with this programme. The first guided sleep meditation is designed to shift your minds focus from the thoughts whirling in your head to your physical body, restoring and calming your body and mind by gently controlling your breathing and relaxing into a restful sleep.

*“ I recommend climbing into bed, laying on your back in a comfortable position and listening to our guided mediation whilst you fall asleep.*

*I hope you enjoy learning to relax your busy mind by listening to this meditation. I will take you through a series of gentle mindfulness and breathing techniques which will teach you how to get yourself to sleep every night" Kirsten*

## 20 Minutes Learning to Relax a Busy Mind and Resting Guided Meditation

[PLAY NOW](#)

# Sleep diary to fill out each morning

A great way to monitor your progress is by documenting your sleep in a sleep diary. This is a dedicated space for you to make note of how you slept each night and as a result how you felt during the day. All of this information will expand your awareness around what is improving your sleep and what is disrupting it.

You can also use this information in your free 15 minutes sleep coaching session with one of the Naturopathic Sleep Specialists to take your sleep to the next level.

Day of the week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
<b>Sleeping</b>							
Did you fall asleep (tick below):							
Easily							
After some time							
With difficulty							
What did you do in the hour before sleeping?							
What time did you attempt to go to sleep?							
How many times did you wake up in the night?							
How many minutes were you awake for?							
What woke you up? (e.g noise, pets, bathroom)							
What time did you wake up in the morning?							
How did you feel in the morning (Tick below):							
Refreshed							
Somewhat refreshed							
Tired/ fatigued							
<b>Food, Exercise, Medicine &amp; Lifestyle Considerations</b>							
Did you use technology 1 hour before bed?	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
Did you exercise for at least 20 minutes?	AM/ PM	AM/ PM	AM/ PM	AM/ PM	AM/ PM	AM/ PM	AM/ PM
Did you drink alcohol?	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
Did you drink caffeine after 2pm?	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
Take any medication and/or supplements?							
How was your mood?							
Did you take a nap?	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
If yes, how long for?							

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Did you exercise for at least 20 minutes?	AM/ PM	AM/ PM	AM/ PM	AM/ PM	AM/ PM	AM/ PM	AM/ PM
Did you drink alcohol?	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
Did you drink caffeine after 2pm?	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
Take any medication and/or supplements?							
How was your mood?							
Did you take a nap?	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No	Yes/No
If yes, how long for?							



# 02

## **Night 2: Understanding Your Blocks to a Good Night Sleep**

**U**nderstanding your blocks to quality sleep is essential in creating an action plan to overcome them.

Through years of research and experience in helping people sleep I have found that the top 10 most common blocks causing people to not sleep are:

1. Stress
2. Not prioritising sleep
3. Circadian rhythm disruption
4. Nervous system overstimulation
5. Nutritional requirements
6. Allergies
7. Medications
8. Medical conditions – other health issues you may have that are impacting on sleep e.g. pain syndromes
9. Hormones
10. Lack of exercise

I discuss each of these in detail for you on the next pages, highlighting the effects each of the blocks have on of sleep. I have also provided you with strategic ways for you to overcome these challenges and positive steps you can take to achieve great sleep.



### 1. STRESS – episodic and chronic

Stress is the number one cause of sleeping problems due to the release of stress hormones which have an alerting effect on the brain. Stress is anything that causes strain to your daily life whether it is mental, emotional or physical. Whilst some stress is needed to get us moving and motivated over exposure to stress may affect all aspects of health and well-being.

In most cases, insomnia occurs with acute psychological, social or medical stress. It is important to note that chronic low-grade stress such as nursing a loved one or staying in a job you hate has a longer and more detrimental impact on sleep (up to 18 months) than episodic stress, a singular event such as a minor car crash which can impact on sleep for up to 6 months.

### 2. Not prioritising sleep - early to bed please!

I need to ensure you are prioritising your sleep. The good news is that the sleep you get before midnight is mostly non-REM sleep (the type of sleep that repairs and restores you) whereas the hours after midnight are predominately REM sleep phases which is where your brain saves all new information learnt the day before.

Your body and mind need both non-REM and REM sleep to be healthy and happy but the earlier you go to bed the better so that your body can do more repair work!

“**The number 1 reason why people are struggling to sleep is STRESS.” Kirsten**

### 3. Circadian rhythm disruption

Circadian rhythm disruption is when your natural body clock and sleep cycles are interrupted. There are many reasons why and how this can happen, including:

- Shift work or irregular working hours
- Delayed sleep phase syndrome; when a person falls asleep very late and unable to wake in the morning
- Advanced sleep phase syndrome; goes to sleep early (6-9pm) and wakes early (1-5am)
- Time zone changes/ jet lag
- Medications
- Intentional changes to sleeping patterns – deliberately sleeping in or staying up late.
- Medical conditions – Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's
- Mental health conditions
- Pregnancy

Your body clock can be brought into balance with the right sleep tools and a plan for success.

### 4. Nervous system over stimulation

In our modern society there is a lot happening with work, finances, relationships, exercise, political and environmental issues and chronic health conditions. We are getting hit with information and stimulation in all directions.

Beware of technology, news sites and social interactions online, Facebook, Instagram etc. If you must be on line watch some cute puppy videos and let the happiness flow!

To keep up with busy lives many people rely upon caffeine from coffee, tea and energy drinks to keep themselves alert. However, for people struggling to sleep, caffeine is an issue because it can take up to 9 hours for 1 cup of caffeine to be metabolised.

Be mindful of what is positively and negatively impacting on your life.

## 5. Nutritional requirements

The body relies on the intake of specific nutrients to support quality sleep. However, with increased biological demand of nutrients due to stress and the change of farming practices and food preparation methods we aren't achieving the daily needed nutrient levels anymore.

What nutrients do we need and why?

- Magnesium – lowered amounts plays a role in insomnia and poor quality sleep. Magnesium is also needed for Slow Wave Sleep ( the deeper phases of the sleep cycle).
- The balance between Calcium and Magnesium is crucial. Calcium tightens muscles, excites nerves & increases inflammation and depletes magnesium whereas Magnesium relaxes muscles, calms nerves, is anti-inflammatory, dissolves calcium so it can be used by the body and is excreted easily so it doesn't build up.
- B Vitamins are building blocks for cellular regeneration, providing support for your central nervous system and keeping you balanced.
- Vitamin C is needed to support healthy Adrenal gland function in regulating cortisol (our stress hormone) and is needed for making Serotonin which helps us sleep. P.S Oranges are not enough!!

## 6. Allergies

Did you know allergies can affect your sleep? Allergies cause an increase in histamine production which stimulates the body's immune and nervous systems triggering sleep loss.

The top 5 allergens that may affect your sleep are:

- Dust mites – unfortunately, dust mites love pillows and bed linen.

- Mould – damp environment can lead to mould, which can set off allergic symptoms among other unhealthy issues.
- Pet dander – animal hair or dead skin is a common allergen.
- Pollen – seasonal allergies causing hay fever and inflammation can disrupt your sleep.
- Food allergies or intolerances – even low-grade food intolerances before bed can disrupt your sleep. Common intolerances or allergens are dairy, gluten, eggs, nuts, and seafood. Even healthy foods like apples or broccoli could be causing problems so you may wish to investigate this in more detail with a Naturopath or health professional.

## 7. Medications

It is important to be aware of the side effects of medications you take regularly as it is not uncommon to have insomnia or disturbed sleep listed as a side effect. If you are having trouble sleeping, this is a likely cause.

For example, Panadol (paracetamol) is a really common medication for people to take but did you know that it blocks melatonin production? Make sure you speak with your doctor if you are experiencing sleeplessness as a result of your medication, perhaps there is a different one you can take or the dosage needs to be reviewed.

Some medications that commonly cause interrupted sleep and insomnia include:

- Paracetamol/ Tylenol
- Anti-arrhythmics
- Anti-convulsants
- Anti-histamines
- Appetite suppressants
- Benzodiazepines
- Bronchodilators
- Carbidopa / Levidopa
- Corticosteroids
- Diuretics
- Decongestants
- Oestrogen
- Sleeping tablets
  - Ambien
  - Zopiclone
- NSAID's
- Lipophilic beta blockers
- MOAI's and SSRI's
- Nicotine
- Pseudoephedrine
- Sedatives and Statins
- Sympathomimetics (ritalin)
- Tetrahydrozoline (eyedrops)
- Thyroid hormones
- Tricyclic antidepressants

## 8. Medical conditions – pain syndromes

Do you have other health conditions that are affecting your ability to fall asleep or cause you to wake up during the night? There are many health conditions that can impact quality sleep. If this is you, finding tools to help manage your overall health and wellbeing is important.

Pain makes sleeping more difficult and poor sleep makes the pain more difficult to control. However, sleep is an important thing to strive for because it impacts on the body's ability to heal. Sleep is the body's tool that helps to manage pain and heal the body.

## 9. Hormones

Hormonal changes can definitely disrupt sleep and although more common in women, men can be affected. The most common hormonal changes that affect sleep are:

- Pregnancy – pregnancy insomnia, hormonal changes
- Menopause – hot flashes, night sweats, decreased production of oestrogen and progesterone (a sleep-promoting hormone)
- Stress hormones - cortisol

## 10. Lack of exercise

Sedentary behaviour – (sitting, reclining posture or low-energy expenditure) has been associated with an elevated risk of insomnia and sleep disturbance.

Australian researchers found that men who sat more than 6 hours a day at work were 90% more likely to feel moderate feelings of nervousness, restlessness, hopeless or tired. See night 5 for suggestions.



# Tips to overcoming your blocks to a good night sleep

1. Focus on your sleep hygiene and create a wind-down routine (see night 3 for ideas).
2. Create a peaceful sleep environment. Ideally, it should be dark, cool and quiet.
3. Manage your stress with exercise, good food and activities to protect your mental well-being (see night 4 for ideas).
4. Set alarms to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
5. Support your whole health, this includes managing any underlying health concerns or niggles.
6. Exercising at least 150 minutes a week can improve the quality of your sleep and reduce the risk of daytime sleepiness (refer to night 5).
7. Take your coaching to the next level by booking a free 15-minute consult with one of our professional sleep specialists at SleepDrops. Whilst I am giving you lots of good information, advice and techniques in this '1 Week to a More Restful Sleep Programme' you may still be motivated to learn more and a personal consultation to address your individual situation may be just what you need.



# Meditation Mantra's

It is really common for busy people to get into bed each night and feel like their mind is a web browser with too many tabs open – having your mind racing with thoughts, lists, and tasks.

If this sounds like you, then its time to learn how to quieten your mind and switch off. I find the easiest way to relax my mind is by using intentional phrases that will encourage my mind and body to calm down.

Select one of the 5 mantras below that helps you feel calm. Tonight when you are settling into bed, instead of staring at the fan, counting sheep or lying there "trying to sleep" simply close your eyes and slowly repeat your chosen Mantra.

Focus your mind on the words of the Mantra, slowing your breathing and continue to repeat your Mantra until you drift off to sleep.

Repeat the words of the Mantra silently to yourself  
over and over, slowly & softly

*1. I am tired, it is time for me to rest*

*2. My mind is calm, my body is relaxed*

*3. I am in bed now, it is time to sleep*

*4. I am going to sleep now, everything is okay*

*5. I am looking after my body, it's time to relax  
and sleep*

**“There is nothing more restorative to the soul, there is nothing more loving to the body, there is nothing more powerful to the mind than the gift of a great night’s sleep”**

Kirsten Taylor  
Naturopathic Sleep Specialist



# 03

## Night 3:

### **Building a Wind Down Routine**

Quality sleep thrives on having a regular routine. Creating a great, consistent wind-down routine each night trains your body and mind to know that it's time for sleep. This will encourage sleepiness and make getting to sleep easier.

# Creating a Wind Down Routine

# 03

Your wind down routine is a time dedicated to relaxation and calming your mind and body to prepare you for sleep... I recommend putting aside an hour for your wind-down activities each night. If you are able to repeat them in the same order, each night, you will get better results because the body LOVES consistency.

To create your wind-down routine start by setting an alarm to alert you 1 hour before you are planning to go to sleep. Add in ALL the things you know you need to do to be able to relax in bed. Then strip it back to only activities that will encourage sleep based on what you've learnt so far.

### Here is an example:

1. One hour before bed alarm sounds on the phone
  2. Shut down ALL technology
  3. Put aside 10 minutes to do your '1 Week to a More Restful Sleep' programme activities
  3. Boil the kettle to make a herbal tea
  4. Get in the shower
  5. Brush teeth and take your sleep supplements
  6. Get your tea and sip it whilst doing the next part of your routine
  7. Climb into bed
  8. Read a book
  9. Write in your journal
  10. Visit the bathroom ready for turning out the light
  11. Listen to a guided meditation or with some sleep breathing techniques
  12. If you are still awake you can fall asleep with your mantra
- NB: A loving relationship thrives on intimacy. Pop it in anywhere here that makes sense for you.

Your routine could be this one or perhaps you have a couple of little evening rituals of your own that you would like to include each night.

### Other activities that you could include are:

- Gentle stretching or yoga postures to help your body unwind
- Have a bath with Epsom salts
- Listening to calming music
- Dimming the lights when it starts to get dark

### What you need to avoid:

- Bright lights
- Loud music
- Technology in the lead up to bed, this includes TV, laptops, smart phone
- Strenuous exercise 4 hours before bed
- Caffeine – so no black or green tea
- Heavy foods



# The magical practice of gratitude journal writing:

# 03

I often get asked why one should consider keeping a gratitude journal or commit to the practice of writing in one. I first fell in love with this practice many years ago when I was a single mum living alone with my young son and my dear friend Theresa sent me a journal all the way from Canada to New Zealand. I didn't have a lot to be grateful for. I was on welfare, raising my son on my own, I had a broken heart and working full time (without pay) to get my SleepDrops business off the ground. Money was tight, things were tough and I was miserable. At first, I was confused and was writing things such as " I am very grateful for the big contract that is coming my way" or things that were not yet real but that I wanted to be. All those sentences did was remind me what I wanted but didn't have.

So I switched my sentences to be a prayer of thanks for what I did have such as " I am so grateful for the extra-long hug I got today", " I am so glad I get to wake up every day giving my dreams my attention", "I give thanks for the hot water and the water pressure that rinsed away my stressful day". Slowly what I found was I would put the pen down with such calm and genuine gratitude for the small miracles and the small moments that positively added to my day. Slowly I began to see more of them, recognise them and collect them throughout my day to write in my journal later that night and slowly my days transformed and my nights became a ritual of gratitude that filled my heart back up and allowed me to drift off to sleep fulfilled.

Since then the world has exploded with bloggers, life coaches and scientists proclaiming its benefits. Even Yale University has a course about the science of well-being and happiness. The studies are clear. Writing in a gratitude journal will help increase your happiness and help you sleep better. What other reasons could you possibly need? Physical benefits? It offers those too, as it has been proven to decrease stress, depression and even lower your risk of heart disease.

On the next page start by writing 3 things you are grateful for today...

Keep it simple - Start with "Today I feel grateful for ....."

As you become more grateful you can write your intro...

Not feeling grateful? That is okay...

Try focusing on something you consider to be just part of life but give thanks for it such as " I give thanks for my bed, my car not breaking down today, my pay coming in on time, having enough money to buy food, my friend sent me a text – you get the idea. Start small and practise every night before bed.

There are many but here are 3 compelling studies that show gratitude works in case you don't want to take my word for it :)

*Journal of Experimental Social Psychology. Volume 81, March 2019, Pages 4-14*

*Burnout from emotion regulation at work: The moderating role of gratitude Personality and Individual Differences. Volume 156, 1 April 2020, 109703*

*The relationship between dispositional gratitude and quality of life: The mediating role of perceived stress and mental health Personality and Individual Differences. Volume 141, 15 April 2019, Pages 40-46*

# Your gratitude journal

## Day 1:

1. Today I am grateful for .....
2. Today I am grateful for .....
3. Today I am grateful for .....

## Day 2:

1. Today I am grateful for .....
2. Today I am grateful for .....
3. Today I am grateful for .....

## Day 3:

1. Today I am grateful for .....
2. Today I am grateful for .....
3. Today I am grateful for .....

## Day 4:

1. Today I am grateful for .....
2. Today I am grateful for .....
3. Today I am grateful for .....

## Day 5:

1. Today I am grateful for .....
2. Today I am grateful for .....
3. Today I am grateful for .....

## Day 6:

1. Today I am grateful for .....
2. Today I am grateful for .....
3. Today I am grateful for .....

## Day 7:

1. Today I am grateful for .....
2. Today I am grateful for .....
3. Today I am grateful for .....



# 04

## **Night 4: How to Manage Stress - Finding Balance**

**W**hat exactly is this thing called stress causing ALL these sleeping problems? Stress is considered something that causes strain to the individual whether it is mental, emotional or physical.

Whilst some stress can be healthy, too much stress can negatively impact on sleep and all aspects of health and wellbeing.

Stress is associated with several chemicals but the 2 main stress hormones in our bodies are Cortisol and Adrenalin. Both of which are stimulating to our brains, muscles and nervous system.

### Stress is linked to:

- Altered brain responses.
- Changes in blood flow and sugar metabolism in the brain, reduced brain connections over time.
- Reduced immune responses and increased inflammatory chemicals.

All of which can affect sleep!

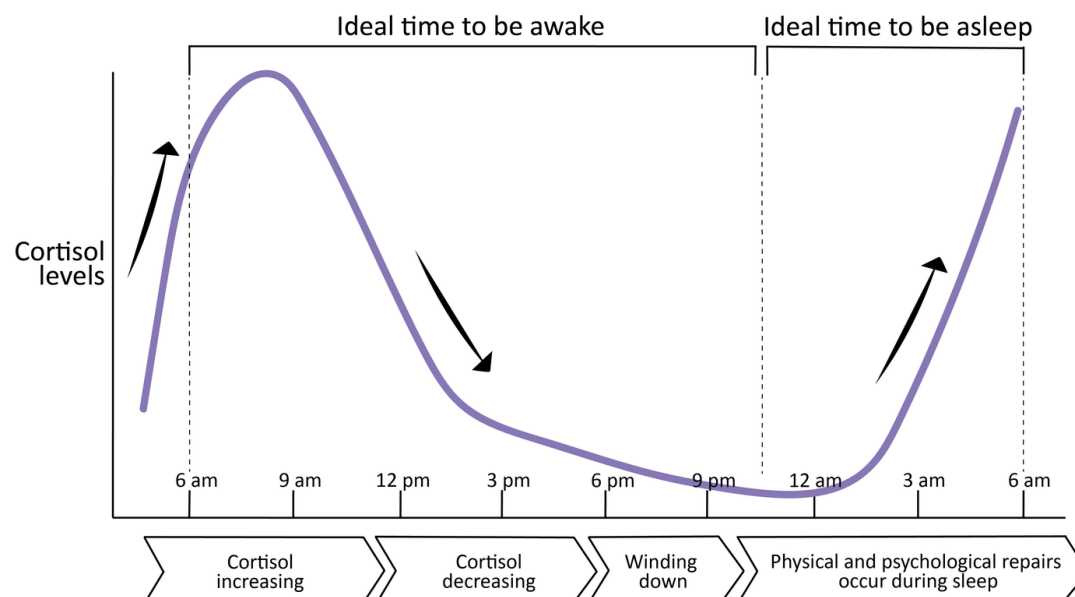
### What role does Cortisol play in our lives?

- Cortisol is an anti-sleep hormone.
- As cortisol levels rise, we are given the energy to begin our day.
- Cortisol levels are naturally highest in the morning, then it reduces throughout the day & are lowest at night during sleep.
- Cortisol levels drop about three hours after dark allowing our body to enter into a period of rest & recovery, physical repair & regeneration.
- If we are stressed Cortisol can “spike” at the wrong time of the night making us alert when we should be sleeping. If you find yourself waking at 1.00 am or 2.00 am cortisol may be out of balance.

### The link between Stress and Insomnia summarised:

- Researchers at the Pennsylvania State University College of Medicine found out that stress hormones such as Corticotropin-releasing hormone (CRH) and cortisol can profoundly negatively affect sleep.
- They found that "insomniacs with the highest degree of sleep disturbance secreted the highest amount of Cortisol".
- Thus the process that regulates the hormone Cortisol which plays a positive role in our daily life by waking us up, keeping us alert and can become out of balance when we are stressed, leading to sleep loss and inflammatory disorders.
- The research shows that any effective holistic insomnia management strategy needs to address stress and include day time anxiety support and stress hormone control measures and night time sleep aids. Simultaneous approaches will be more effective.

### Daily Cortisol Activity



## Perspective

A small amount of stress can be a good thing. We all grow and move forward when we are in situations which challenge and ask more of us. But often the demands of these situations, work, study, relationships, home life, expectations, can get so big or go on for so long that they overwhelm us. As stress builds up we become less able to deal with it effectively and if we are not aware of the impact of stress we may find that we are not coping or judging ourselves as “less than our best”.

## Causes of stress:

There are many situations that may make you feel stressed but the following are classic triggers of stress, especially if you are dealing with more than one at a time:

- An excessive workload – yes this does include children!
- An uncomfortable physical environment, e.g. prolonged extremes of temperature or noise
- Not enough sleep. Not quality sleep
- Ill health
- Prolonged physical activity
- Financial difficulties
- Renovations
- A change in your living or working patterns: Leaving home, new flatmates or new job, Moving house
- Pregnancy
- Bad self-image: ‘I’m too fat’, ‘... too dumb’, ‘... too ugly’
- Living or working or studying in an environment that is not of your culture or language

- Hostile, or uncomfortable emotional environments, e.g. restructuring, redundancy, unhealthy relationships
- A break-up of a relationship
- The death or loss of a friend, relation or pet

**To reduce stress in your life try to develop a lifestyle which nourishes all your needs: physical, mental and emotional:**

- Make sure you get enough exercise, sleep and good quality nutritious food.
- Take time out each day for rest and recreation and for your social activities.
- Get some “me” time.
- Establish supportive relationships and friendships.

**If you’re already experiencing stress in your life, the worst thing to do is to just keep going and ignore it**

- Stop.
- Assess your situation and work out exactly what is making you feel this way.
- Take action to improve it. Ask for help!

**Normal Cortisol levels drop about three hours after dark allowing our body to enter into a period of rest & recovery, physical repair & regeneration. If you are waking in the night Cortisol may be an issue you need to address.**

## **If you find yourself starting to get stressed out:**

- Take control by consciously relaxing; through physical exercise, breathing exercises or doing activities you enjoy.
- Be creative in your approach to tasks. For example, if you feel stressed at the prospect of extra work in the office, ask the advice of your boss or tutor or another work colleague on the approach you need to take.
- Talk to some friends and take a team approach to problem solving.
- Talk with others about your anxieties and concerns.
- Never be afraid of asking for help. Everyone experiences stress at some time.
- Accept your failures and move on. See value in your mistakes: no mistake = no progress.
- Be encouraging and supportive of yourself. Always appreciate who you are and the unique qualities you have.
- Try to keep things in perspective. If a situation is getting on top of you, step back, adjust your goals and take action – do what you can and learn how to say no.
- Most of us are very good at giving advice. Try looking at your situation as if it were someone else's - a friend, perhaps. Think about the advice you would give them, and follow it yourself.

Most important is to remember that stress is a normal response but ignoring it is not a good idea, instead acknowledge it and think about what support you can give your body so that it may cope with the stress better BEFORE it becomes "dis-ease".

- Hydration levels keep the brain clear so you can make good decisions. Drink 30mLs of healthy pure water for every kg of body weight per day e.g. 70 kg person = 2100mLs. Consume no more than 200mLs per half hour. In other words drink regularly throughout the day.
- Certain vitamins, minerals and herbs have been shown to support Cortisol and the stress response as well as and the nervous system - refer to our resource section for products we recommend.

**“Take control by consciously relaxing; through physical exercise, breathing exercises or doing activities you enjoy. The following page has a very powerful relaxation inducing body breath scan that I share with all my clients with fantastic results which you can read and guide yourself through.**

**However, I have made an audio version - it is a really lovely and relaxing extended version for you to be guided through to help you fall off to sleep at the end. Make sure you have the volume at a nice relaxing level where you can hear me without straining but not too loud to be stimulating to your brain.” Kirsten Taylor**

## **26 Minutes Body Breath Scan Stress Relieving, Relaxation and Sleep Guided Meditation**

[PLAY NOW](#)

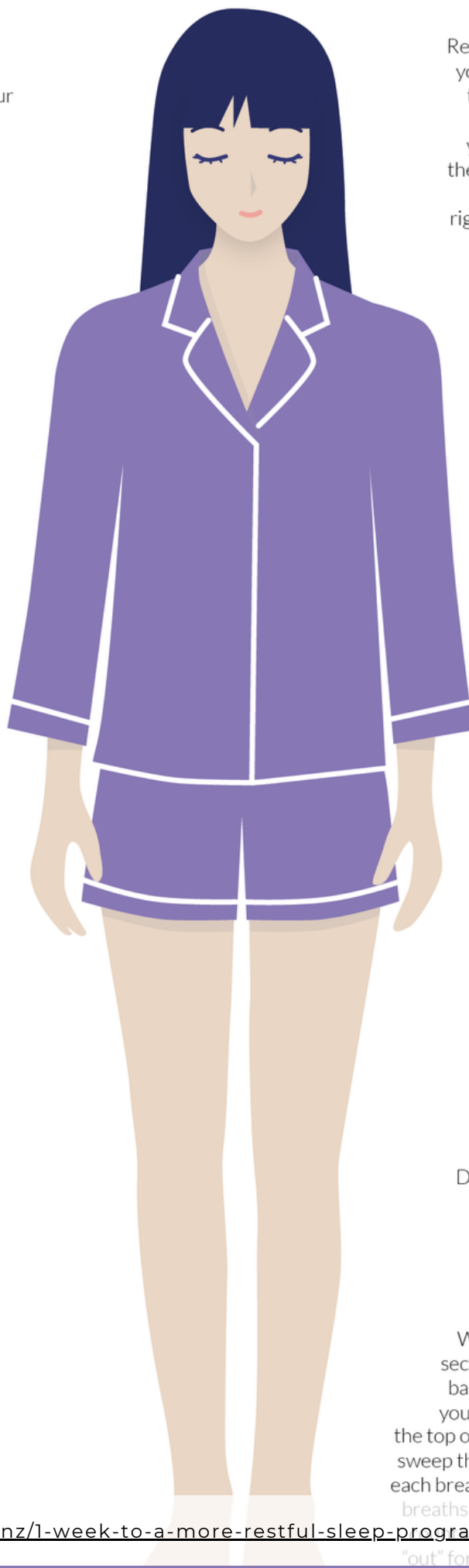
**1** Lie on your back in your bed or wherever you plan to fall asleep. Lie with your legs outstretched and your arms resting by your side. Close your eyes. Take a moment to notice the different parts of your body in contact with the bed. Then take 3 deep breaths in and out loudly and slowly, letting your body soften into a comfortable position.

**2** Keeping your attention on your breath, allow yourself to breathe deeply and slowly. Place your hand on your belly to help connect with the sensation of breathing in and out, notice the rise and fall of your belly. If at any time you lose focus or your mind begins to wander, just bring your attention back to your breath and the in and out motion of your breath. Take 5 more deep breaths here.

**3** After 5 deep breaths, place your hands back by your side. Now slowly move your attention to your heart and now imagine your vision slowly moving down your body, down to your torso (the mid-section of your body), down to the top of your left leg, down your thigh, down your knee, through to your ankle and slowly into your left foot. As you move down your body ask yourself "Is there anything to notice? Any warm areas, coolness, tightness, tingling or numbness?" Just notice what is present (or absent).

**4** Move your attention to the heel of your foot, your sole and toes, then the whole of your left foot. All the time noticing any changes or whatever is arising. Continue to breathe very slowly and deeply, trying to slow your breath down a little more for each breath. Focus on your current experience, what is happening in your body right now.

**5** If you find any area that you notice or are drawn to, do 3 slow deep breaths into that area and consciously release any stress that may be there. Keeping your attention on your breath, imagine you are now breathing all the way down from your heart into your left foot (up and down your left leg) as slowly as you can. Continue to breathe into the left side from your heart to the end of your toes for 3 breaths, each time trying to breathe a little



Repeat this scan process for the right side of your body now. Slowly move your attention to your heart and now imagine your vision slowly moving down your body, down to your torso (the mid-section of your body), down to the top of your right leg, down your thigh, down your knee, through to your ankle and slowly into your right foot. As you move down your body ask yourself "Is there anything to notice? Any warm areas, coolness, tightness, tingling or numbness?" Just notice what is present (or absent).

Move your attention to your heel, sole and toes and then the whole of your right foot. All the time noticing any changes or whatever is arising. Continue to breathe very slowly and deeply, trying to slow your breath down a little more for each breath. Focus on your current experience, what is happening in your body right now.

If you find any area that you notice or are drawn to, do 3 slow deep breaths into that area and consciously release any stress that may be there. Keeping your attention on your breath, imagine you are now breathing all the way down from your heart into your right foot (up and down your right leg) as slowly as you can. Continue to breathe into the right side from your heart to the end of your toes for 3 breaths, each time trying to breathe a little more slowly than the breath before.

Move on to each area of your body - left arm, right arm, neck and shoulders, head and face. Breathe deeply and calmly into each section of your body, noticing warmth, coolness, tension, tingling or numbness. Do 3 additional breaths in any area that needs extra stress release.

When you have finished scanning each section of your body, take your attention back to your breath once more, imagine your breath filling your entire body, from the top of your head to the toes of your feet. Let the breath sweep through all of your body in slow, deep breaths. With each breath imagine your body relaxing and letting go. Your breaths should be nice and slow by now. Notice how many breaths you have taken. Count "in" for 9 and "out" for 11. Hands on your belly. Continue to breathe this



# 05

## Night 5: Exercise for Sleep Wellbeing

If you are struggling to sleep at any part of your night or waking unrefreshed and not exercising, it's time to add exercise to your life. You know it's good for you. It's really good for sleep! Why? Your body literally needs to be tired in order to sleep really well.

There is a huge amount of evidence connecting exercise to improved sleep.

Being physically active can increase the time you spend asleep and physical body movement has been shown to increase the time spent in deep sleep. Deep sleep is where your body is able to really repair and restore each night.

Exercise not only improves sleep it also boosts mood, relieves anxiety and reduces stress. Your mental health is important and research shows that 30-minutes of moderate exercise five times per week will help you reap the rewards of a happy mind and it will help with insomnia or sleep disorders.



# “Exercise boosts mood, relieves anxiety and reduces stress.”

## What type of exercise is best?

Physical activity that gets your heart rate up has been shown to support sleep and reduce the effects of sleep disorders. If you're looking to get your heart rate up, activities such as running, brisk walking, cycling, high-intensity training and swimming have been shown to improve restful sleep and aid people in getting to sleep.

Otherwise, strength training to build muscle has been scientifically studied to improve the quality of sleep, help people fall asleep faster and wake up less often during the night. So if you enjoy weights, then perhaps adding a few more shoulder presses and weighted squats to your workout routine can make a huge difference.

For people who are looking to unwind and connect with their breath whilst toning their body then yoga is the right choice. Daily yoga for 8 weeks has helped people with insomnia get to sleep faster, reduce stress and increase time sleeping.

## What type of exercise do you do?

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## What more could you pop into your life?

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## What exercise have you always wanted to try?

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## What time of day should you exercise and for how long?

Timing does matter. Exercising late at night can cause your body to produce stress hormones to allow you to do that activity. You want to avoid strenuous exercise in the 4 hours leading up to bed. Working out too late in the evening can leave you stimulated and energised when you want to be relaxed and unwinding.

Exercising late in the day also increases your body temperature for up to 4 hours after you finish working out. When you get into early sleep phases your core body temperature needs to drop which makes you drowsy. Exercising too close to bedtime can interrupt this natural drop in body temperature.

We recommend exercising earlier in the day (at least 4 hours before you want to go to bed) to keep your temperature balance, your body tired and mind ready for sleep.

You can, however, do some gentle stretching, relaxing yoga or go for after-dinner stroll to prepare your body and mind for sleep.

## How much exercise is recommended for sleep?

The National Sleep Foundation (USA) recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise each week, so you can break that down to 30 minutes five times per week or approximately 20 minutes every day. This will help you sleep better and improve your overall physical well-being.

## Controlling your Cortisol with exercise:

Stress will keep you awake or cause you to wake up during the night due to an inappropriate release of cortisol, whereas exercise will cause a release of Dopamine (a feel good hormone) that will help your body feel less stressed and support sleep .

# 05

## Night time stretches to Wind Down

I have included for you a gentle exercise sequence that you can add to your evening wind-down routine. These stretches are perfect for calming down before bed to promote sleep. They are remarkably effective so give them your attention for 10 minutes each night. Work your way through each exercise 1-10, giving each one approximately 1 minute to stretch and really feel good.

### 1. Child Pose

Find a space on the floor to do some gentle stretching. Start on your hands and knees. Separate your knees a little bit wider than your hips and draw your toes together. Now lower your hips back towards your heels and rest your forehead on your mat with your hands out in front of you. Walk your fingertips forward so that your arms begin to stretch out in front of you, rest your forearms on the floor. Close your eyes and breathe deeply and calmly for 5 to 10 breaths.



### 2. Cat/ cow

Move back on to your hands and knees, into a table top position. Line your wrists under your shoulders and your knees under your hips. This is a two part pose to stretch the muscles around your spine. When you inhale, drop your belly towards the floor creating a dip in your back and lift your sit bones and crown of the head towards the ceiling. Then when you exhale, move your back in the opposite direction, rounding your back towards the ceiling and shift your gaze to your navel. Repeat these two movements whilst breathing slowly five times.



### 3. Downward facing dog

Move from your table top position into downward facing dog. This is a full body stretch and can feel particularly good if you've spent a long time sitting down today. Pedal your feet to stretch your legs out. You can also do any other movements that may feel comfortable for your body. Take 5 deep breaths in this position.



#### 4. Standing, forward fold

From downward facing dog, slowly walk your feet to meet your hands. Let your head and hands hang down in front of your legs. Gently sway your arms from side to side releasing any tension. Take 5 breaths here. Slowly reach for your toes, stretching your arms and the backs of your legs for a gentle release. Then come up to a standing position.



#### 5. Gentle standing spinal twist

Stand with your feet hips width apart, shoulders relaxed and breathe deeply. Then raise your arms out in front of you and gently turn your upper body to the right, slowly twisting your chest and waist to face the right side. Your feet should not move. Then move your gaze and body back to the center, continue to breathe deeply. On your next inhale turn your body to the left, gently twisting your upper body to the left side of the room. Repeat this 3-5 times on each side.



#### 6. Seated forward fold

Make your way to a seated position, with your legs stretched out in front of you. Begin to hinge forward at the hips as you fold over your legs. You can place your hand on your shins, ankles, toes or where ever is comfortable for you. Don't worry about keeping your legs straight or your back flat, just allow your body to release tension. Breathe deeply here 3 times.



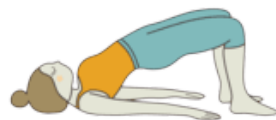
#### 7. Seated ankle rotations

Ease yourself back into a seated position, keeping your legs straight out in front of you. Gently point your toes and flex your feet. One foot at a time rotate your ankle in one direction and then the other direction. Continue to inhale and exhale. Once you have finished shake out your legs.



#### 7. Bridge pose

Lay down on to your back. Bend your knees and draw the heels of your feet into your sitting bones. Rest your arms alongside your body. Press your feet and arms into the floor as you begin to lift your tailbone up. Continue lifting until your thighs are parallel to the floor. Hold this pose for up to one minute, all the time focusing on breathing slowly. Release this pose by rolling your spine back down to the floor vertebra by vertebra.





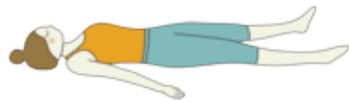
### 8. Happy Baby Pose

Once you are comfortable laying on your back, bring your knees up to your chest, and open your legs with the soles of your feet pointing upwards. Grasp your feet and begin to roll and rock your legs from side to side. This will gently massage your back muscles.



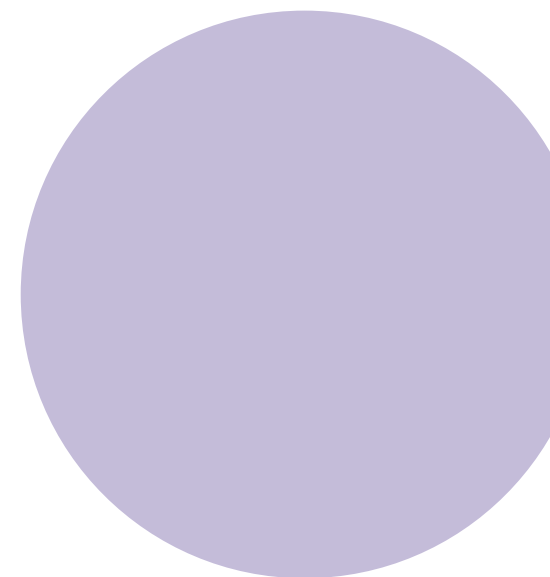
### 9. Legs up the wall or Legs up

Let go of your feet and straighten your legs. Your hips should be at a 90 degree angle. Many people like to do this version against a wall, so they can rest their legs. Otherwise, holding your feet to the ceiling, stacking your ankles over hips. Notice how the blood rushes from your feet to your upper body. This posture is excellent for circulation and to help to settle the mind before bed.



### 10. Final Relaxation

This is your final exercise. Lay your body flat on your back in a comfortable position. Allow your mind to become calm and still as you focus on inhaling and exhaling. When you feel your body and mind begin to drift off, it's time to make your way to bed ready for a restful sleep.





# 06

## **Night 6: Nutrition, Supplements and Recipes for Better Sleep.**

**T**he food you eat plays a big role in supporting your body to achieve a restful nights sleep. Sleep depends on the quality and quantity of the food consumed. Studies have shown that food deprivation results in a reduction in sleep duration.

Brain function and the sleep hormones your body produces are dependent on the nutrients you eat. For example, in order for your body to produce melatonin, the hormone that ensures you get good quality sleep, your body needs specific nutrients such as; tryptophan, magnesium, calcium, and vitamin B6. If your diet is lacking in even one of these nutrients, your melatonin production may be compromised, leading to a restless night.

# 06

Let's learn a little more about the power of food and how it can impact on sleep - either positively or negatively...

## Foods that disrupt sleep:

### Caffeine

It's no surprise that an evening cup of coffee might disrupt your sleep. Even moderate caffeine can cause sleep disturbances. But don't forget about the less obvious caffeine sources, like chocolate, cola, tea, and decaffeinated coffee. For better sleep, cut all caffeine from your diet nine hours before bedtime.

### Sugar

In regards to sugar - the National Sleep Foundation (USA) says "pumping lots of added sugar into your body can negatively impact the quality of your sleep. In fact, the more sugar that you eat during the day, the more often you're going to wake up in the middle of the night." Time to try a low or no sugar nutrition plan?

### Digestion before bed

Research shows that people who often eat high-fat foods not only gain weight, they also experience a disruption of their sleep cycles. Another factor to consider is your food portions throughout the day. Eating a big meal before bedtime is not ideal, as your digestive system which wants to be slowing down will be activated, compromising your ability to fall asleep. Lying down with a full belly can make you uncomfortable. It can also lead to heartburn, as can spicy cuisine. Make sure to finish a heavy meal at least four hours before bedtime. That being said, it's also not a good idea to go to bed hungry, as an empty stomach can be distracting and make it more difficult to fall asleep. As always balance is the key.

## Foods that induce sleepiness:

Foods that induce sleepiness are the type of foods that provide building blocks to neurotransmitters such as Serotonin. Without adequate levels of Serotonin in your system, you will not be able to sleep well. Serotonin is dependent on certain nutrients coming from your food such as Tryptophan. Tryptophan is an amino acid that your body cannot make; you must obtain it from the foods that you eat. .

The key to getting enough Tryptophan in your brain to sleep well at night is to combine a Tryptophan-rich food with a carbohydrate-rich food.

You may remember that in the Sleep Hygiene section I recommended you try having a small cracker with some Turkey on it.... that snack is a perfect example of how to combine Tryptophan rich food with a carbohydrate to get a good result.

Don't worry about the science behind this information. Humans are a very complicated, biochemical being. The most impressive super computer!!

Just stick to the following 5 guidelines:

## 5 food guidelines for sleep and general wellbeing:

1. Aim for whole foods - fresh, unprocessed - still in their natural state
2. Lots of colours (rich in antioxidants)
3. A balance of protein, carbohydrates and fats throughout the day
4. Eat 5 or more servings of vegetables and fruit a day
5. Avoid high fat foods with dinner as these can disrupt sleep

## Supplemental Nutrients needed for sleepiness:

**Magnesium:** 350-400 mg is the recommended daily intake for adults according to the Ministry of Health for Australia and New Zealand. Not all magnesiums are equal.

**Vitamin C:** The Ministry of Health for Australia and New Zealand suggested an high level intake of up to 1,000 mg, however they also acknowledges studies show safe intake of up to 4,000 mg. The US Food and Nutrition Board suggests 2,000 mg for adults ranging down to 400 mg in children aged 1-3 years.

**Zinc:** Findings in clinical studies and as documented by the Ministry of Health for Australia and New Zealand, the appropriate nutrient intake levels for zinc are 10-50 mg for adults.

**Vitamin B6:** 30-50 mg is the recommend daily intake for adults as shown in scientific studies and published in the Nutrient Reference Values for Australia and New Zealand.

Ideally you are looking for a supplement that has all of these in the correct balanced formulation to support stress and sleep. Please see my resources page for products that I highly recommend.

What foods contain these nutrients?

Magnesium:	Red meat, Chicken liver, Pork, Chicken ,Turkey, Nuts: Almond, Brazil, Cashew, Hazelnut, Pecan, Peanuts, Pine, Pecan, Pistachio, Walnut, Sesame seeds, Tahini, Sunflower seeds, Yeast, Chocolate (dark), Chilli powder, Curry powder, Mustard powder, Goats milk, Dried fruit: Apple, apricot, currant, dates, figs, sultana, prunes, Passionfruit, Banana, Blackberry, Raspberry, Legumes, Shallots, Spinach, Parsley
Vitamin C:	Blackcurrant juice, Guava, Banana, Blackberry, Red Chilli peppers, Red peppers (Capsicum), Parsley, Watercress, Cabbage, Strawberries, Papaya, Rock melon, Citrus fruits, Broccoli, Brussel sprouts, Green peppers, Cauliflower, Kohlrabi, Snow peas
Zinc:	Oysters, Red meats, Liver - chicken/ veal/ lamb, Nuts: Brazil, almond, cashew, chestnuts, peanuts, pecan, pine, walnuts, Chicken, Duck, Turkey, Cheese - esp. hard yellow types & blue vein, Yeast spread, Tomatoes – sundried,
Tryptophan:	Soy protein, Spirulina, Oat and wheat bran, Cheese, Meat, Nuts and seeds, and Eggs

Here is a one day meal plan with recipes for a whole day high in sleep nutrients:

**Breakfast:** Scrambled Eggs with Smoked Salmon, Spinach and Chives

**Lunch:** Thai Beef Salad

**Dinner:** Turkey and Broccoli Pasta

**Snacks:** Mixed nuts and seeds, Banana, Citrus fruits

# 06

# Breakfast Recipe

## SCRAMBLED EGGS WITH SMOKED SALMON, SPINACH AND CHIVES

SERVES 1

### INGREDIENTS:

1 Tablespoon olive oil  
2 eggs  
50 gram smoked salmon, diced  
1 cup chopped fresh spinach  
1-2 slices of whole grain toast  
½ teaspoon chopped chives  
Sprinkle of salt and pepper

### METHOD:

1. Heat oil in medium nonstick skillet over medium heat. Combine eggs and pepper in medium bowl; stir well with whisk. Pour egg mixture into skillet; cook 30 seconds or until mixture begins to thicken, stirring slowly with wooden spoon.
2. Stir in salmon; cook for 30 seconds. Stir in spinach; cook 2 minutes or until spinach wilts and eggs are cooked, stirring constantly. Top each piece of toast with 1/2 mixture. Garnish with chives, if desired.

## VEGAN OPTION: COCONUT CHIA PUDDING WITH BANANA & NUT TOPPINGS

SERVES 2

### INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup chia seeds  
1 cup coconut milk  
1 teaspoon maple syrup  
1 banana, sliced  
2 tablespoons coconut yoghurt  
2 tablespoon mixed nuts and seeds

### METHOD:

1. Combine and whisk chia seeds, coconut milk and maple syrup on a bowl.
2. Put in fridge for 30 minutes or until it becomes gel consistency.
3. When ready to eat, top with coconut yoghurt, banana and mixed nuts & seeds



# 06

# Lunch Recipe

## THAI BEEF SALAD

SERVES 2

### INGREDIENTS:

#### Dressing

1 clove garlic  
1 jalapeno halved  
1 lime juiced  
1 1/2 Tablespoons fish sauce  
2 Tablespoons minced lemongrass  
remove the tough outer leaves and slice  
the tender white core  
1 1/4 teaspoons brown sugar  
1/4 teaspoon red chili flakes

#### Steak

1/2 Tablespoon vegetable oil  
250 gram New York strip steak  
2 medium shallots thinly sliced  
1/4 cup fresh mint leaves loosely packed,  
roughly chopped  
3 Tablespoons roughly chopped  
coriander leaves and stems

#### For serving

Spinach, water cress, silver beet –  
roughly chopped  
Cherry tomatoes halved  
Parsley

### METHOD:

#### Dressing:

1. Mince the garlic and one of the chili halves and place in a small bowl. Slice the remaining chili half into thin rings and add it to the bowl, along with the lime juice, fish sauce, lemongrass, brown sugar, and red chili flakes. Taste and adjust seasonings with additional lime juice, fish sauce, sugar, if needed. Stir well and set aside.

#### Steak:

2. Heat the oil in a skillet over medium high heat. Sear the steak until it is well browned on one side, 5 to 6 min. Flip and cook until the second side is dark brown and the meat is medium rare, another 5 to 6 min. Transfer to a cutting board and let rest for 5 min. Slice the steak thinly and then cut into bite-size pieces.

3. In a medium bowl, combine the beef (and any accumulated juices), shallots, mint, and coriander. Stir the dressing and pour it on top. Toss gently.

#### Serving:

4. Serve steak on top of chopped spinach, watercress, silver beet, halved tomatoes and sprinkle with parsley.

### FOR VEGAN OPTION:

Swap beef for tofu and add cashew nuts

# 06

# Dinner Recipe

## TURKEY AND BROCCOLI PASTA

SERVES 6

### INGREDIENTS:

1 large onion, chopped  
400 gram turkey mince  
1 tbsp olive  
oil, extra virgin  
3 cups any short pasta  
3 cups veggie or chicken stock  
1 tsp salt  
Ground black pepper, to taste  
400 gram broccoli florets  
3 tomatoes, diced  
1-2 garlic cloves, grated  
Red pepper flakes, a pinch  
1/2 cup parsley, finely chopped  
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated

### METHOD:

1. Saute Onion and Turkey, Preheat large Dutch oven, pot or deep skillet with a lid on medium heat. Swirl oil in a hot pot and spread with spatula to coat its bottom. Add onion and saute for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Just enough till fragrant. Add turkey mince and cook for 5 minutes, breaking into pieces and stirring with spatula. Doesn't have to be cooked through and pink is OK.
2. Add Pasta and Cook for 10 Minutes. Add pasta, stock, salt and pepper. It should come to a boil as you are stirring. Level with spatula. Cover and cook on low heat for 10-12 minutes, checking after 10 minutes. Pasta should be al dente – not too soft. So it doesn't become a mush when we cook broccoli further.
3. Add Broccoli and Let Stand. When pasta is ready, turn off the heat. Add broccoli, tomato, garlic and red pepper flakes. Stir, cover and let stand for 3-5 minutes. You can chop parsley and grate Parmesan cheese in the meanwhile.
4. Serve While Warm. Add parsley and Parmesan cheese – gently stir.

### FOR VEGAN OPTION:

Swap turkey for tofu and add pine nuts. Make sure you use veggie stock

## 24 Hour Circadian Rhythm



Awake time  
makes up  
2/3 of our  
day



Sleep time only 1/3  
of our day

Day and Night  
impact on  
each other

# 07

## Night 7: What we do during the day impacts our night

I have spoken to many people over the years about how to achieve quality sleep each and every night. I have found that people forget one major factor that affects how they sleep at night. Do you know what that is?

It's what we do and how we feel during the day. Your day time effects your night time. The body has a 24 hour circadian rhythm or body clock, we are awake for part of it and asleep for part of it.. Sleep is not just an 8 hour sleep time operating in isolation. The awake portion affects the sleep portion and vice versa.

So what is happening in your every day life plays a BIG role in the quality and quantity of sleep that you get each night.

# 07

## What governs our Circadian Rhythm?

Our circadian rhythm is governed by the relationship between two main hormones. As we learnt on page 26 Cortisol (our alerting hormone) rises in response to daylight waking us up for the day. Whereas Melatonin rises in response to darkness and makes us sleepy. All of this happens over a 24 hour period.

Melatonin is the main sleep hormone regulated by your body clock. Melatonin rises to help prepare the body for sleep after darkness and tapers off when the sunrises and it's time to wake up.

Melatonin works like a see-saw with Cortisol (also known as the stress hormone). As Melatonin rises with darkness, Cortisol lowers and then as Cortisol increases again with the rising of the sun, Melatonin decreases.

## How can I regulate my Circadian Rhythm?

Start each day by opening up the curtains immediately after waking up and expose yourself to natural light and sunshine. If you can get outside and in direct sunlight in the morning and throughout the day this will support consistency in your circadian rhythm. At night try not to have too many lights on and switch the Blue lights off on your devices, turn off any electronic devices with led lights and wear an eye mask to bed. These techniques will help your body produce Melatonin.

Your circadian rhythm is also controlled by hormones, inflammation, stress and our environment. Making small changes to positively influence all of these areas of your life will make a big difference to your health and sleep overall.

Here are the important factors to remember to do during the day to positively impact on sleep during the night:

- Keeping a steady routine
- Getting up at the same time each day
- Getting sunlight exposure in the first 30 minutes of the day
- Hydration
- Eating the right food at the right time
- Avoiding caffeine after 2 pm
- Avoiding sugar
- Managing stress
- Exercising
- Taking the supplements and herbs to help your body
- Practicing gratitude ALL day long
- 20 minute nap or mindfulness
- Spending time with loved ones
- Balancing work/ life/ community commitments

# 6 Ways to Wake Up Happier



## Rethink your alarm

Could you do anything to make hearing your alarm more positive? Perhaps switching the sound to something more cheerful rather than a loud beep beep beep. Or writing yourself a motivational message in the alarm description. Both of which could help you start your day with a slightly more positive mind set.



## Stop snoozing

This doesn't do you any favours, it actually makes it harder to get up. When you hit the snooze button you throw off the body's sleep cycle, leaving you feeling lethargic for longer. Give yourself a maximum of 3 chances to hit snooze and then that's it - go start your day!



## Switch your phone to flight mode

Many of us check out phone for updates first thing in the morning to catch up on missed notifications. But doing so first thing can stress you out and put you in a bad mood from the time you get out of bed. Instead, try going through your morning routine without technology and actively check your phone when you're up and awake. Don't worry your alarm will still go off.



## Think about gratitude

We introduced the concept of a gratitude journal on night 3. You can use the journal each night before bed but in the morning you can think of three things you're grateful for today – it could be the morning coffee your going to make.



## Be prepared

Getting yourself organised the night before can take the struggle out of the morning. You can pack your day bag, make lunch, set out clothes, all the night before that way all you have to focus on is getting out of bed and eating breakfast.



## Bare feet on the grass and setting some sunshine

If you are in a safe place and have the opportunity to do so, getting out side first thing in the morning and soaking up some sunshine is a brilliant way to start your day. Otherwise just opening your curtains and letting in daylight will boost your mood and help you to get out of bed faster.

# Well done on completing your 1 Week to a More Restful Sleep Programme!

I am so proud of you for committing and coming to the end with me.

Make sure you continue to use your sleep diary to monitor your progress. Acknowledge each small milestone - they ALL add up to change your life for the better! You have already come so far in just one week so keep going!

Throughout the programme, you have learnt new information and been taught many tools to assist your body and mind achieve quality sleep each night. The skills I have shared with you during this programme are a strong foundation for maintaining a powerful and restful sleep routine that you can build upon in future and your sleep should continue to improve as you remain committed to these new behaviours.

I want to make sure you have all the support you need, from meditations, sleep diaries, access to my award-winning products, more sleep in-depth programmes to build on your knowledge and sleep results and even a professional consultation if you want it, you already have 15 minutes FREE to use with this programme. These are simply opportunities IF they feel right to you to continue on your healthy sleep journey with me (see the next page).

It has been my absolute pleasure to guide you through this process. I hope you are more in love with sleep than ever before.

I wish you blessings, great health & sweet dreams

*Kirsten* xxx

If you have fallen in love with the information and the sleep tools and processes I am sharing, make sure you sign up to be even more inspired and informed when I next release my '30 night Sleep Better Challenge' via my website  
[www.sleepdrops.co.nz](http://www.sleepdrops.co.nz)

Sleep is the most life-enhancing and healing body process that you can do each night. It is the key to optimal well-being and ongoing health. However, sometimes your body needs to be supported on more than one level at a time. To really experience optimal health I highly recommend you book a comprehensive Naturopathic wellness consultation at SleepDrops Sleep and Wellness Centre – Our highly qualified and professional team also offer long-distance consultations for those that cannot make it in person & treat people all over the world.

Want to know more? email us at [info@sleepandwellnesscentre.co.nz](mailto:info@sleepandwellnesscentre.co.nz) and I'll get my Naturopathic Doctor to reply and address your inquiry.

## Do you want to take your sleep to the next level?

At SleepDrops we are sleep researchers and formulate natural and innovative sleep and stress support products that support your body to get to sleep faster and stay asleep during the night. Our products are award winning and flexible to support every sleeping challenge.

[Click here for access to my products](#)

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# RESOURCES

In the last week we have given you a whole bunch of super helpful resources that we know could benefit your sleep. These additional resources will make your sleep journey even better.



Take SleepDrops award winning stress & sleep supplements each night  
\*highly recommended

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20 Minutes learning to relax a busy mind and resting guided meditation

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