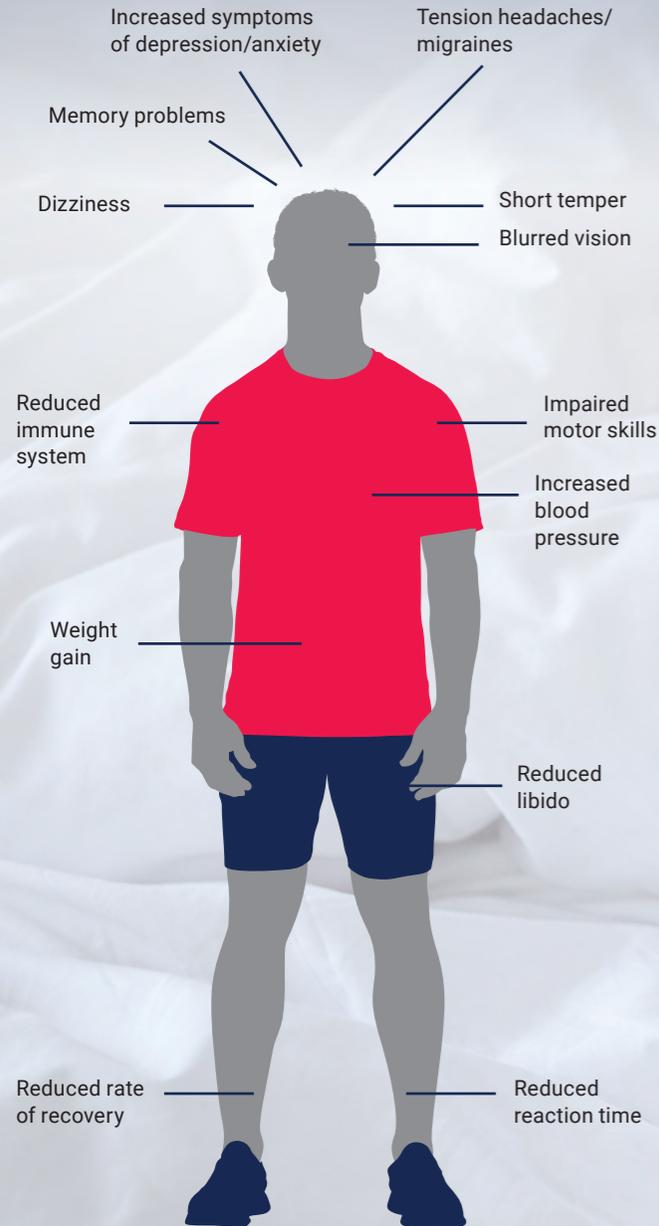


POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS FROM CHRONIC LACK OF SLEEP



All of these side effects can be overcome by improving your sleep.

HELP for HEROES

SUPPORT FOR OUR WOUNDED

CONTACT DETAILS

Scotland, Northern Ireland, the North East and the North West:

07808 789492

catterick.supporthub@helpforheroes.org.uk

East and the Midlands:

01206 814892

colchester.supporthub@helpforheroes.org.uk

South and South East:

1980 844 238

tedworth.support.hub@helpforheroes.org.uk

South West:

01752 562179

west.hub@helpforheroes.org.uk

Wales and Hereford:

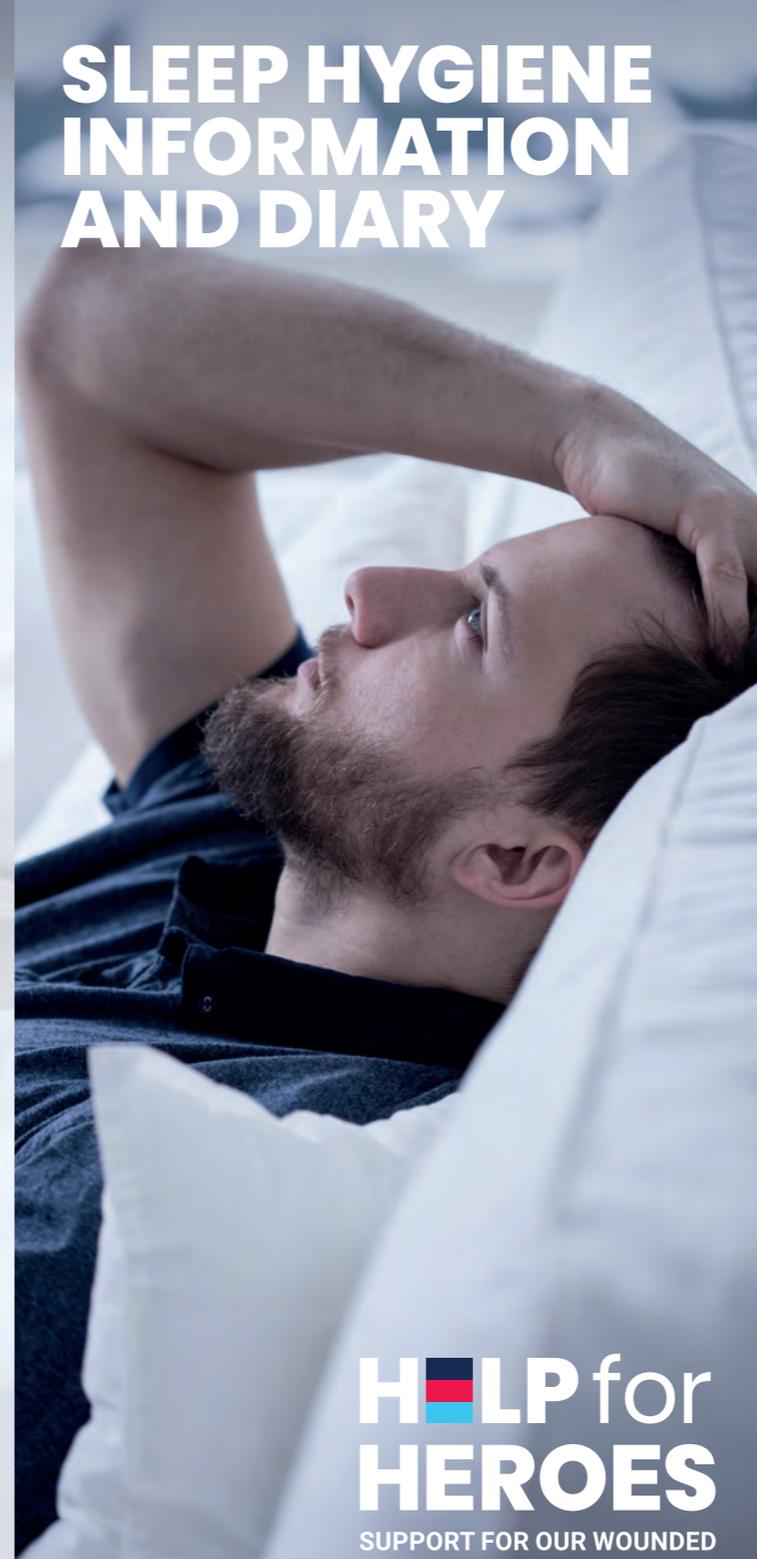
01443 808910

wales.supporthub@helpforheroes.org.uk

“ Sleep is the golden chain that ties health and our bodies together.”

Thomas Dekker

SLEEP HYGIENE INFORMATION AND DIARY



SLEEP INFORMATION

Sleep is essential for your health and wellbeing. Getting a good night's sleep helps protect your psychological and physical health, improves your quality of life and supports growth, development and repair. These are all important for recovery and beyond.

Everyone is different, and people's sleep needs vary. On average, a person needs eight hours sleep a night in order to function well during the day. However, some people need just five hours whilst some need at least 10 hours of sleep a night.

If you think you have a sleep problem, it is best to see your GP to rule out any underlying medical cause. This leaflet provides sleep hygiene tips and a sleep diary, to help you monitor your sleep and identify patterns. If you are struggling, Occupational Therapy at Help For Heroes will be able to discuss this with you.

HELP for HEROES

SUPPORT FOR OUR WOUNDED

TIPS FOR A BETTER NIGHT'S SLEEP

Do
Make your bedroom a calm and relaxing space to be in, by keeping it as clean and as clutter free as possible.
Have a well-established night-time routine. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This gets your brain in the habit of sleeping at a set time and prepares you for sleep.
Have a long, warm bath before bed. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try using lavender scents in the bath and on your pillow (or any scent you find calming).
Listen to relaxing music. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This can be soothing sounds or your favourite music at low volume.
Try some self-relaxation techniques. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yoga and mindfulness activities can help. There are many useful resources available online for both, or your occupational therapist (OT) or yoga instructor can guide you.
Try some light reading before bed to help relax your mind.
Get up, leave your bedroom and do something relaxing if you can't get to sleep within 30 minutes of going to bed, until you feel sleepy again. Do this if you wake up in the night as well. It will help minimise the association of being awake and being in bed.
Try to create the habit of going to bed and waking up at a regular time each day.
Only go to bed when you feel sleepy so you associate being in bed with feeling tired.
Maintain a comfortable sleeping environment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> not too hot or cold reduced noise and light levels (try earplugs or use music to distract you from unwanted noise).
Remove the clock (or phone) from your bedside table, or turn it away so you can't 'clock watch'.
Eat a light meal, earlier in the evening. If you're hungry before bed, try having a biscuit.

Fill in this sleep diary around breakfast time, over the next week. It will help you to identify any patterns and see where you can make improvements. You can discuss this with your GP, Occupational Therapist or other health professional if you feel you need help to interpret the information.

Name:	How long have you had difficulty with your sleep:						
	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6	Day 7
Questions							
What time did you go to bed last night?							
Once you were settled, how long did it take you to fall asleep?							
What was the total length of time were you awake for during the night, after you initially fell asleep?							
What time did you finally wake up?							
What time did you get up?							
Did you take any sleeping medication last night?							
Did you nap yesterday?							
How well do you feel this morning? 0 (not at all) 1 2 (moderately) 3 4 (very)							
How enjoyable was your sleep last night? 0 (not at all) 1 2 (moderately) 3 4 (very)							
How active was your mind in bed last night? 0 (not at all) 1 2 (moderately) 3 4 (very)							
How physically tense were you in bed last night? 0 (not at all) 1 2 (moderately) 3 4 (very)							
How anxious were you in bed last night? 0 (not at all) 1 2 (moderately) 3 4 (very)							

TIPS FOR A BETTER NIGHT'S SLEEP

Try to	Tried	Result
Avoid watching TV or doing other daytime activities in bed. This breaks the association between bed and activity.		
If you can, try to make lie-ins an occasional treat, so that your mind learns to associate your bed with being a place to sleep in.		
If you smoke, have fewer cigarettes in the 3-4 hours before bed and not at all an hour before bed as nicotine is a stimulant		
Try not to chat to friends online or on the phone just before bedtime.		
Don't drink caffeine in excess (or at all, if possible) as it stimulates the brain and keeps you awake. Try to have your last caffeinated drink around lunchtime.		
Avoid alcohol. It reduces sleep quality and stops you feeling rested.		
Avoid thrillers, horror films or the news before bed as they can stimulate your brain and keep you awake/alert.		
Don't use the computer or play computer games before bedtime.		
If you like to exercise in the evenings, try to finish within four hours of bedtime, as exercise raises your core body temperature and affects your ability to fall asleep.		
Don't have the heat up too high in your bedroom, as your body drops in temperature to induce sleep.		
Avoid heavy meals and very spicy foods late in the evening.		
Try to put down your phone, laptop or tablet 90 minutes before bed. The blue light these screens emit stimulate the brain and keep you alert and awake.		