

sleeping well for a healthy headspace





“After making small changes to my routine I really noticed the positive benefits of quality sleep. I feel brighter, more optimistic, and energetic when I sleep well.”

May Lyn, hY NRG member
(headspace Youth National Reference Group)

Getting the right amount of quality sleep can give you more energy, improve concentration, help you better deal with stress and, you guessed it, keep a healthy headspace!

Sleep and your mood

Quality sleep is like a mental health superpower.

When you get enough sleep it's easier to manage your emotions, you have more patience and you deal with stressful situations better. Also, you reduce your risk of mental health challenges in the future!

Yet, it's so common to struggle to sleep. That's because your sleep can be impacted by many things – from the food you eat to feeling worried or anxious and even using your phone before bed.

So... how much is enough? If you're aged between 12-17 then 8-10 hours sleep is ideal, while 18-25 year olds should try to get 7-9 hours.

Here's how those zzz's can improve your headspace. It can:

- give you more energy
- improve your memory, attention and concentration
- make you less likely to crave unhealthy snacks
- help you better deal with stressful situations.

Ask an expert – how do I sleep better?

Michael Gradisar is a sleep expert from the National Sleep Foundation. Here are his quick tips for improving your sleep.

- At least an hour before bed, switch from video games, YouTube and social media to TV or watching a movie.
- Lower the brightness on your phone and computer screens at night. Some have features where you can automatically dim and change the colour of your screens to help you prepare for rest.
- If you find it hard to wind down, try a mindfulness exercise like one from the Smiling Mind app.

- Try to sleep the same amount every night. An extra hour, every now and then, is fine – but any more can confuse your body clock.
- If you need to get up during the night try to avoid turning on bright lights and hop back into bed quickly.
- Avoid caffeine at least six hours before you go to bed.
- If you can, avoid napping during the day.



“For years, whenever I was feeling low and stressed I would stay up really late. It really affected my mental health.

I read about the link between quality sleep and mood so I decided to try to improve my routine. I began with small changes – aiming to be in bed before 11pm. And from about 9pm I would watch Netflix or read, instead of browsing the internet or chatting with friends online. Slowly my routine changed and now I really notice the positive benefits of quality sleep – I feel a lot brighter, optimistic, and energetic when I sleep well. And I'm more productive!

It can take a while to find something that works and things can get thrown out of whack. So it's important to be patient and flexible. Try different things and be kind to yourself.”

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When you're feeling low or stressed it's important to put healthy habits in place that build your emotional strength – to prepare yourself for riding life's ups and downs.

Getting a good night's sleep is one of these healthy habits, but it's not the only one. Things like exercise, eating well, and spending time with people you love also play an important role in good mental health.



If you or someone you know is going through a tough time you can get help and support from headspace, your school or university wellbeing service or your local health provider. For more information, to find your nearest headspace centre, or for online and telephone support, visit [headspace.org.au](https://www.headspace.org.au)



If you need immediate assistance call 000 or to speak to someone urgently, please call Lifeline on 13 11 14 or Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467.

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