



Sleep/Moe

Adapted from www.getselfhelp.co.uk

This resource is for people wanting to improve their sleep/moe. It includes information on other resources and support available.

While medication can be used to treat insomnia, it is generally only effective for short-term use. Ongoing use of medication can lead to dependence and poor-quality sleep. You may sleep for longer but not wake refreshed. It is important to talk to your GP about the best course of action for your situation, especially if your poor sleep continues. Long-term insomnia or sleep apnoea can impact mental and physical wellbeing. The following approaches and strategies can make a difference whether medication is used or not.

If you have trouble sleeping because of stress or negative feelings, remember, you don't have to do this alone. Seeking support from your whānau, friends, GP or health professional can help you get through. If you feel overwhelmed or just want to talk, call or text **1737**, or check out support options at the end of this resource.

Create a space that promotes sleep

The right space

Your bed and bedroom need to be quiet, comfortable and feel safe. A cooler room with enough blankets to keep warm will improve sleep quality. Block out extra light with curtains or an eye-mask. Use earplugs for noise.

Bed is for sleeping

Use your bed for sleeping and intimacy, so your body associates it with sleep. If you use your bed as a place to watch TV, eat, read, check messages and social media, study, work or pay bills, it will be hard to switch your mind off and sleep.

Daytime activities can help you to sleep

- › Exercise – regular exercise supports good sleep. However, try not to do strenuous exercise in the hours before bedtime. Morning exercise is good for your sleep at night.
- › Eat well – a healthy balanced diet helps you sleep well. Timing is important. A heavy meal too soon before bed can disrupt sleep. For other people, an empty stomach at bedtime disrupts their sleep. So, a light snack can be helpful. Warm milk or a banana is recommended as they are rich in a natural sleep inducer called tryptophan.
- › No naps – to make sure you are tired at bedtime, avoid taking naps during the day. If you take a nap, make sure it is less than one hour and before 3 pm.
- › Keep your morning and daytime routine the same – even if you have a bad night's sleep and are tired/ngenge, keep your daytime activities as planned. Get up at the usual time and do not avoid activities because you feel tired. This can make sleep worse.

Leading up to bedtime

Be consistent and aim to go to bed and get up at the same time every day, regardless of what you did during the day, be that work/mahi, looking after tamariki, or spending time on your own. This regular rhythm trains your body to have a better sleep cycle and helps you feel better.

Sleep rituals

Develop your own rituals to help your body prepare for sleep. Some ideas are below.

- › Do relaxing things for the last hour or so before bed, like reading or listening to nature sounds. Do not involve yourself in stimulating activities in the lead up to bedtime and switch off from technology.
- › Have a hot bath 1 to 2 hours before bed. It raises your body temperature and makes you feel sleepy as your body temperature drops.
- › Do relaxing stretches or breathing exercises for 15 minutes before bed each night.
- › Sit calmly with a cup of caffeine-free tea before bed.
- › Avoid caffeine and nicotine: for at least 4 to 6 hours before bed, like coffee, tea, cola drinks, energy drinks, chocolate, and some medications. These make it harder to get to sleep and may decrease your sleep quality.
- › Avoid alcohol/waipiro: for at least 4 to 6 hours before bed. While many people think alcohol relaxes them and helps them get to sleep, it decreases sleep quality.

During the night

- › Sleep when sleepy – try to sleep when you feel tired, rather than spending too much time awake in bed.
- › Get up and try again – if you have not fallen asleep after 20 minutes get up and do something calming or boring until you feel sleepy. Then return to bed.
- › No clock-watching – turn your clock so you cannot see it at night. Checking the time during the night causes many people distress and stops them from sleeping.

Keeping going

These things can help you sleep better. It does take time to establish a good sleeping pattern. Keep practising even if they don't seem to work straight away.

Further support and information

Support

- › If you are feeling stressed, anxious, overwhelmed or just want to talk to someone, call or text **1737**.
- › Smiling Mind is an app that helps with mindfulness, sleep, and stress. | <https://www.smilingmind.com.au/thrive-inside>
- › Healthline provides free health advice and information. | **0800 611 116**
- › If your difficulty sleeping persists, contact your GP or health professional for advice.

Information

- › The Ministry of Health offers a directory of general wellbeing information and tools. | <https://www.health.govt.nz>
- › The Ministry of Health allows access to certain health websites without incurring mobile data charges. See below for a list of these websites. | <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/digital-health/other-digital-health-initiatives/sponsored-data>
- › Health Navigator NZ offers information, advice, and resources for people having difficulty sleeping. | www.healthnavigator.org.nz/healthy-living/s/sleep
- › The Sleep Well Clinic offers advice and support for sleep and health. | www.sleepwellclinic.co.nz
- › Te Hikuwai – Resources for wellbeing provides information on a range of topics from anxiety, depression, and substance use to stress, relaxation, and wellbeing. | <https://www.tepou.co.nz/tehikuwai>

Iti nei, iti nei

Take smalls steps to achieve your goals

