

SLEEP



**MOVE
AGAINST
CANCER.**

Why is optimal sleep important?

Sleep trouble is common for people living with or recovering from cancer but we know it's of huge importance when it comes to feeling well physically and mentally and there are ways we can manage improving our sleep - small, manageable actions can make a big difference.

Our bodies need rest generally but especially to help with the side effects of cancer and its treatment, including and especially cancer related fatigue.

It is important to ensure recovery from physical activity, muscle relaxation and therefore less tension and soreness.

Sleep helps our bodies recover, repair and in turn, feel rejuvenated; it supports immunity, positive mental health, reduced brain fog and better physical function for activities of daily living and physical activity participation.



Some reasons we might struggle with sleep:

- Cancer itself can directly impact our sleep quality
- Treatment side effects
- Medications
- Pain
- Anxiety
- Hormone fluctuations
- Our environment, routines or habits
- Being less physically active than we might previously have been



Hints and Tips:

- It is important to remember we're all different and on unique journeys, not all of the suggestions here will work for you. Try to be consistent before writing anything off, but don't put pressure on yourself if something doesn't work. Try not to panic if you can't sleep, it won't be beneficial, all rest helps!
- One of the most important things we can do for circadian rhythm (our internal body clock) is implement consistency in routines - sleep and wake times!
- Implement a relaxation/wind down routine before bed - this will help tell the brain and body that it is time to sleep. Perhaps try a 'mind dump'?
- Avoid caffeine, alcohol, screens, stimulating environments or activities, naps too close to bed time and going to bed hungry or too full.
- Make sure your bedroom is dark, cool, comfortable and quiet.
- Physical activity in the day can help us to sleep later on, simple movement supports better rest, it only needs to be small, gentle movement but try to avoid it very close to bedtime.
- Hide your clock in your room so that you don't end up clock watching and becoming stressed.
- If you think that medication is impacting your sleep it might be worth chatting with your medical team to see if there are any tweaks that they might be able to make to help.

'Moving gently
in the day can
help the body
rest at night'

