



Why do we need sleep?

Did you know that you could survive for three times as long without food as you could without sleep? In the UK, 74% of adults sleep less than 7 hours each night, increasing their risk of mortality by 13%.

Why do we need it?

Sleep allows us to perform several key tasks:

- ▶ Downloading and storing memories
- ▶ Rest and rejuvenation
- ▶ Muscle growth and repair
- ▶ Hormonal processes

How much sleep do we need?

Adults require around 7-9 hours of sleep but in some cases 6 or 10 may be appropriate for certain individuals. Everyone is different.

3 tips to improve your sleep

1. The body likes routine, especially when it comes to sleep. A consistent bedtime and getting up time will help the body establish a healthy pattern of rest.
2. Sleepiness is induced by a reduction in light. Avoid the use of electronic devices close to bedtime as the blue light they emit confuses the brain into thinking it's still daytime.
3. If you are struggling to drift off because of a busy mind, get your thoughts out of your head and onto paper and come back to it in the morning.

World Sleep Day is celebrated every year on the Friday before the Spring Equinox. It takes place this year on Friday March 16th. The clocks go forward in the UK just over a week later so don't lose any more sleep than you need to!

For more information, visit the Sleep Council website <https://sleepcouncil.org.uk/>

Quote of the month

“Lack of activity destroys the good condition of every human being, while movement and methodical physical exercise save it and preserve it - Plato”

Look after your kidneys

Kidneys are one of the most important organs in the body.

They remove excess water and toxins, control our blood pressure, and strengthen our bones. They efficiently filter 180 litres of blood around the body every day.

Sadly, around 1 in every 8 people in the UK will develop Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD), so we should ensure we make the right lifestyle choices to take care of our kidneys. Poor diet, low physical activity and smoking can all increase the risk of kidney damage.

Here are some things to consider:

- ▶ Maintain a healthy balanced diet, low in salt and saturated fat. High salt and fat will increase your blood pressure and accelerate damage to the kidneys. Additional body fat increases the risk of obesity and type 2 diabetes, increasing the risk even further.
- ▶ Increase physical activity levels. Even a brisk walk will be beneficial.
- ▶ Avoid smoking as it reduces blood flow to the kidneys reducing their efficiency.

- ▶ Stay hydrated. Drinking plenty of water will flush out excess sodium, urea and toxins from the body. As well as supporting our kidney function, staying hydrated helps us to stay alert, concentrate and maintain productivity. A 2% reduction in hydration levels can cause a massive 20% reduction in both physical and mental ability.

Top tips to stay hydrated

- ▶ Women should aim for 1.6 litres and men 2 litres of fluid per day
- ▶ Don't wait until you're thirsty. By that point you'll be de-hydrated already
- ▶ Drink frequently - keep a water bottle by your desk or in your vehicle
- ▶ Don't overdo it – excessive amounts of fluid can be dangerous
- ▶ Help staff monitor their hydration levels by placing a urine colour chart in your office lavatories
- ▶ Keep a 7 day drinks diary to assess your drinking behaviours. Make sure to include how you were generally feeling each day.
- ▶ Eat more fruit and vegetables as some can be as much as 80% water.
- ▶ Avoid high sugar/high calorie drinks and too much caffeine and alcohol (as they will de-hydrate you)

World Kidney Day takes place on March 8th
For more information visit
<http://www.worldkidneyday.co.uk/>

Nutrition and Hydration Week takes place March 12th-18th. Visit the website for further information
<https://nutritionandhydrationweek.co.uk/campaign-resources/>

Facts of the month



Right now, around 64,000 people in the UK are being treated for kidney failure

Seventeen hours without sleep results in performance impairment equivalent to that caused by two alcoholic drinks.

Food of the Month



Sardines – high in Omega 3, Vitamin D and protein. Good source of sleep-inducing amino acid Tryptophan.