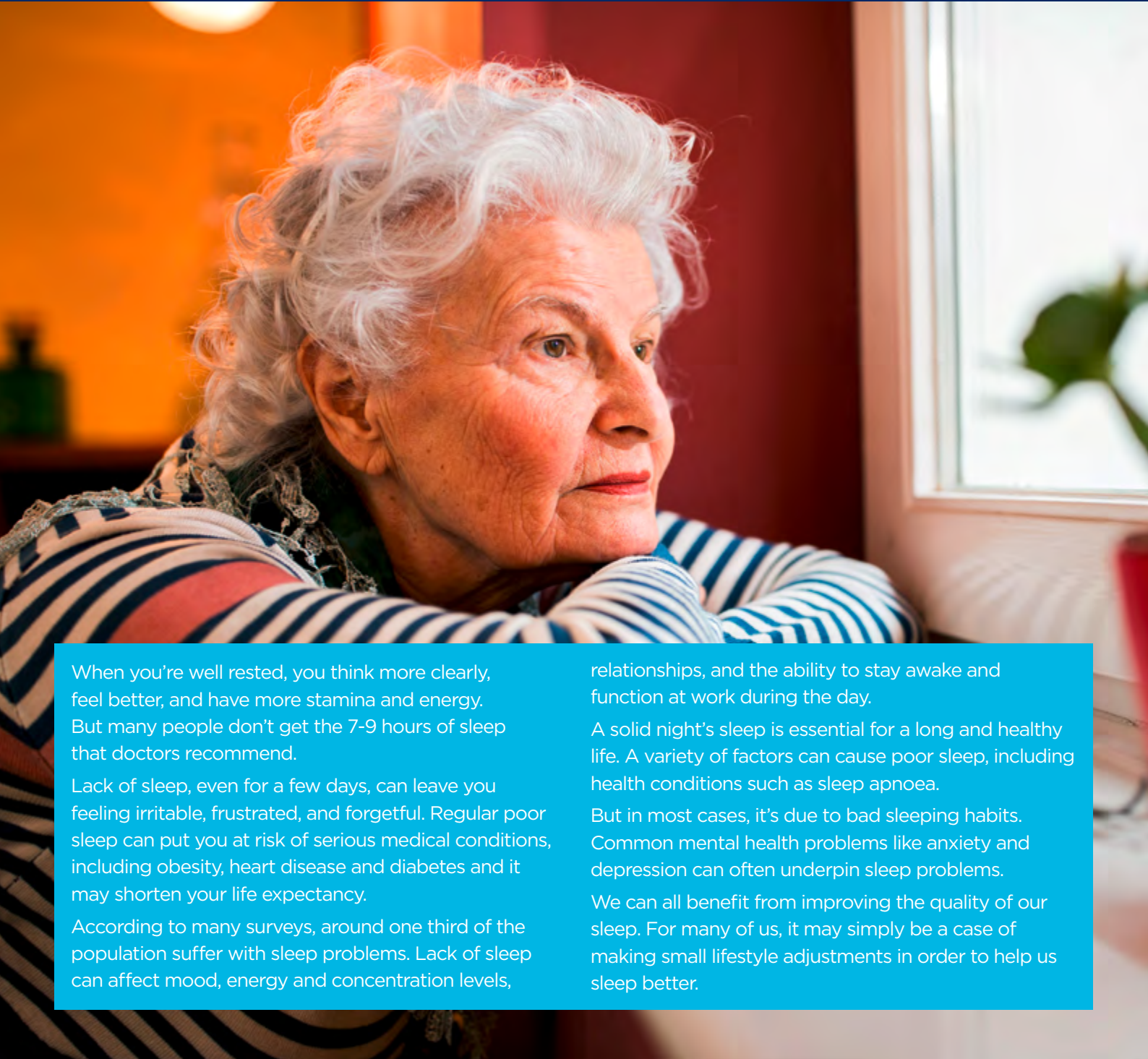


September 2024

We spend about a third of our lives asleep. Sleep is essential - It is as important to our bodies as eating, drinking and breathing, and is vital for maintaining good mental and physical health. Sleeping helps us to recover from mental as well as physical exertion.



When you're well rested, you think more clearly, feel better, and have more stamina and energy. But many people don't get the 7-9 hours of sleep that doctors recommend.

Lack of sleep, even for a few days, can leave you feeling irritable, frustrated, and forgetful. Regular poor sleep can put you at risk of serious medical conditions, including obesity, heart disease and diabetes and it may shorten your life expectancy.

According to many surveys, around one third of the population suffer with sleep problems. Lack of sleep can affect mood, energy and concentration levels,

relationships, and the ability to stay awake and function at work during the day.

A solid night's sleep is essential for a long and healthy life. A variety of factors can cause poor sleep, including health conditions such as sleep apnoea.

But in most cases, it's due to bad sleeping habits. Common mental health problems like anxiety and depression can often underpin sleep problems.

We can all benefit from improving the quality of our sleep. For many of us, it may simply be a case of making small lifestyle adjustments in order to help us sleep better.

Tips for Getting a Good Night's Sleep

Go to bed and get up at the same time every day.

Even at the weekend, a predictable schedule sets your body's internal clock to expect to sleep at a certain time each night. If you feel you haven't slept well, resist the urge to sleep in longer than normal, getting up on schedule keeps your body in its normal wake-up routine.

Create a bedtime routine. Ease the transition to sleep by engaging in relaxing activities beginning an hour or so before bedtime. You could have a bath, do some light reading or listen to soothing music.

Write down your thoughts and worries and things you need to do the next day. This will help clear your mind and reduce worry.

Get regular exercise. Daily exercise can help you get to sleep faster and to sleep better. Just be careful not to do it close to bed time as exercise produces stimulants that stop the brain from relaxing quickly.

Limit caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, and other substances that may keep you awake. Stay away from these when it's close to bedtime, and limit any consumption of caffeine to 6 to 8 hours before you want to fall asleep. Caffeine and nicotine are stimulants that make it harder to sleep and alcohol interferes with sleep quality.

Watch what and when you eat at night.

Finish your evening meal several hours before you go to bed, and avoid food that you know upsets your stomach and could keep you awake.

Don't watch the clock.

Keeping an eye on the clock when you want to fall asleep (or when you wake up in the middle of the night) can increase stress and make it harder to sleep. Turn your alarm clock's face away from the bed. If you use a phone alarm, set your phone face down.

Limit electronics at

bedtime. Be careful about television, radio, and computer activities just before bed, as they may be overly stimulating, particularly due to the blue light that electronic devices emit. Don't bring your tablet, phone, or other electronics to bed.

If you can't get to sleep within 20 minutes of going to bed or if you

wake up in the middle of the night and can't get back to sleep. Get up and do something relaxing until you feel sleepy again. Try reading or listening to soothing music. Or use mindfulness meditation techniques. Just remember to keep the lights dim so that you don't signal your body that it's time to wake up.

Make your bedroom a comfortable environment for sleeping. It should be cool, dark, and quiet.

Deal with stressful tasks earlier in the day or evening.

It may be harder to relax and go to sleep if you engage in demanding tasks, like paying bills or dealing with a difficult parenting issue, just before bedtime.





If you're experiencing sleep problems, you may want to talk to your GP. Many sleep problems are temporary and go away on their own but some may be related to depression, anxiety, or chronic pain, all of which can be treated with professional help. If you have sleep problems that last longer than a week, see your GP.

GETTING HELP:

- www.nhs.uk
- www.nhs.wales
- www.nhsinform.scot
- www.mentalhealth.org.uk
- www.sleepcouncil.org.uk
- www.mind.org.uk
- www.britishsnoring.co.uk/
- www.sleep-apnoea-trust.org/

The benefits of a good night's sleep:
<https://youtu.be/Cn3bypi8cCg>

Police Mutual Services

Worrying about money can be extremely stressful and may lead to mental health conditions. Police Mutual are here to help.

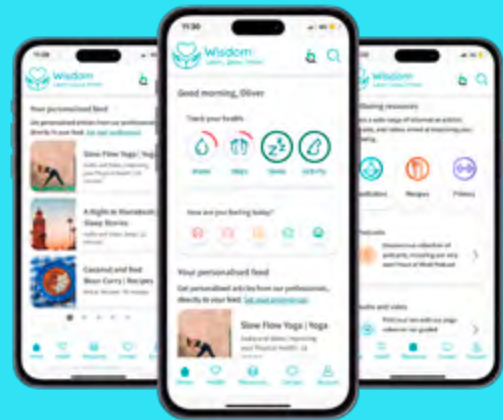
We've teamed up with **PayPlan***, one of the UK's leading free debt advice providers, who offer free and confidential advice to anyone in serious financial difficulties.

They're able to advise you on a range of debt solutions suited to your individual circumstances, helping to protect you and your family with a sustainable way to manage your debt.

Get free and confidential help to combat your debt, call **PayPlan*** on 0800 197 8433.

Our Care Line Service provided by Health Assured can offer advice and information, helping with a range of concerns including emotional support. Take a look at the e-portal or download the APP.

Wisdom App



Download the **Health Assured App** and register today - your code is **MHA107477**



To read more of our wellbeing guides take a look at the wellbeing pages on the NARPO website.

Visit policemutual.co.uk



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