

FACT SHEET

Sleeping Difficulties

Sleep problems are common, especially during periods of stress. Improving sleep usually comes from changing patterns consistently rather than finding a quick fix.



clear, practical, supportive

WHAT IT CAN LOOK LIKE

- Difficulty getting to sleep, staying asleep, or getting back to sleep
- Light, broken, or unrefreshing sleep
- Feeling tired but wired at night, then flat during the day
- Poor concentration, irritability, memory slips, or heavier reliance on caffeine
- Sleeping at inconsistent times and feeling out of rhythm

WHAT CAN CONTRIBUTE

- Stress, anxiety, low mood, grief, or pain
- Irregular sleep and wake times
- Late caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, or heavy meals
- Too much stimulation near bedtime, including phones or work
- Daytime naps that reduce sleep pressure at night

Why it matters

- Poor sleep affects mood regulation, memory, learning, and patience.
- When sleep is inconsistent, everyday tasks often feel harder than usual.
- Trying harder to sleep can sometimes increase frustration and alertness.
- If sleep problems persist, it can help to look at both habits and underlying causes.

Helpful reminders

- Aim for a steady rhythm rather than a perfect night.
- The bed should feel like a cue for sleep, not a place for worrying.
- Small changes repeated consistently are often more effective than dramatic changes.

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

Choose the ideas that feel realistic for you. Small consistent changes usually work better than trying to change everything at once.

- Keep a regular wake time. A stable morning routine is one of the strongest ways to reset your body clock.
- Create a wind-down period. Spend the last 30 to 60 minutes before bed doing low-stimulation activities.
- Reduce sleep disruptors. Keep the room dark, cool, quiet, and separate from work where possible.
- Use the bed for sleep. If you are awake for a long time, get up briefly and do something quiet until you feel sleepy again.
- Watch the timing of stimulants. Caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, and vigorous late-night exercise can all affect sleep quality.
- Manage daytime sleep. If you nap, keep it short and earlier in the day.
- Offload thoughts before bed. Write tomorrow's tasks or worries down so they are not looping in your head.
- Seek a medical review if snoring, breathing pauses, pain, nightmares, or long-term insomnia are part of the picture.
- Track what makes the problem better or worse. A short note in your phone or diary can reveal patterns you can actually use.
- Aim for steady progress, not perfection. Review what helped this week and keep the plan realistic enough to repeat.



TRY THIS TODAY

Start with one small, achievable step.

- Choose a consistent wake time for the next seven days.
- Set a phone-free wind-down alarm 45 minutes before bed.
- Prepare a simple pre-sleep routine you can repeat each night.

WHEN TO GET EXTRA SUPPORT

- Sleep problems have lasted for several weeks or are getting worse.
- Fatigue is affecting safety, driving, work, or parenting.
- You snore heavily, stop breathing in sleep, or wake gasping.
- Sleep is being affected by significant anxiety, low mood, pain, or nightmares.