

Sleep

Why is it important to sleep well?

A healthy lifestyle includes getting enough quality sleep. In the short-term, lack of sleep can have a negative impact on mood and cognitive skills such as communicating well, memory and creative thinking.

Regular lack of sleep can affect health, and is linked to serious health conditions such as obesity in children and young people, and heart disease and type 2 diabetes in adults.

How much sleep do children need?

Children and young people need good quality sleep to function at their best. The amount of hours that are needed vary, depending on age.

- Children aged 5-11 years need around 9 ½ – 11 hours.
- Children aged 11-16 years need around 9 – 9 ½ hours.

For more information on children's sleep click here: <https://bit.ly/2K0jGyl>

Sleep and bodyweight

Not getting enough quality sleep has been linked to a higher intake of energy (calories), eating more snacks and snacking on less healthy foods.

Being sleep deprived can also change levels of hormones involved in appetite, making us feel hungrier.

Tiredness and fatigue may increase sedentary behaviour and reduce physical activity.

These factors may increase the chance of weight gain which could, overtime, lead to obesity.

Sleep well tips for children

- Establish a regular routine for going to bed and waking up.
- Avoid giving your child large meals close to bedtime.
- Create a 'sleep friendly' bedroom – a dark, quiet and cool environment.
- Turn off devices like TVs, tablets and phones at least 1 hour before bedtime and keep these devices outside the bedroom.
- Encourage physical activity during the day.