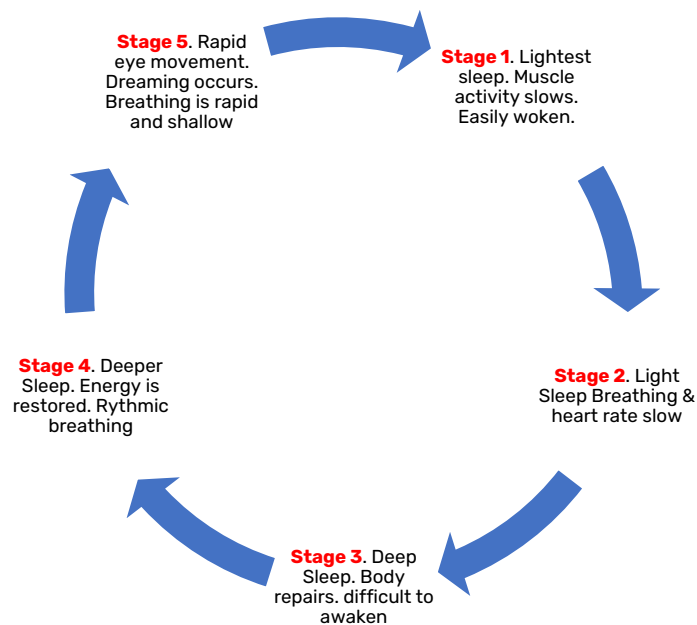


## Conserving Energy

### Improving your sleep

Sleep is frequently a problem. Common difficulties that people have include sleeping too much, difficulty falling asleep and broken sleep. Not everyone needs the same amount of sleep, and quality of sleep changes over a life time. As a rule people over 60 do not sleep quite as soundly as younger people. The length of time spent in deep sleep changes but everyone experiences the stages below.

### 5 Sleep Cycle Stages: Repeats every 90-120 mins



The following plan might be a useful guide to make the most of your rest periods.

- **Get up at the same time each morning.**

The effect of sleeping late into the morning or afternoon is that you may not be able to sleep when you go to bed at night. If you are sleeping long into the day, gradually cut back by getting up 15 minutes earlier until you reach your target time.

- **Preparing for sleep.**

Aim to go to bed at the same time, try to wind down during the hour or so before, include some sort of relaxation. Develop a regular order of doing things that will act as signals to your body that it is preparing for sleep, such as brushing your teeth or reading. Avoid activities that cause wakefulness. Don't go to bed until you are sleepy.



- **Ensure your bedroom becomes associated with sleep.**

Get out of bed if you can't sleep and are feeling restless. Don't continue lying there. Instead do something which will occupy you ie. reading, watching some TV, or making a drink, ideally in another room. Don't try to get back to sleep too soon; wait until you start to feel sleepy.

- **Keep a worry book.**

Write down the issues that are worrying you, and possible steps towards resolving them. If you wake or cannot get to sleep for worrying about the problem, know you have the matter in hand and that worrying about it now will not help. It may be worth putting aside a specific amount of 'worry time' every day when you can deal with such problems (do this during the day, or at least two hours before you go to bed). If a new worry occurs to you, write it down or remember it to deal with in the next 'worry time'. It may be useful to use this time to **practice your relaxation techniques.**

- **Create a restful environment.**

Reduce light and noise. Ensure your bed is comfortable and take medication if needed. Temperature is important; cooler can enable a better night sleep 15C-18C

- **Avoid stimulants.**

Try to avoid stimulants within 4-6 hours of going to bed; this includes coffee, tea, chocolate drinks, fizzy drinks, and cigarettes. If you do drink alcohol, try to avoid doing so during the last 2 hours of preparing for bed.

- **Know how naps affect you.**

A nap during the day can be restorative but try not to sleep more than 40 mins

- **Exercise regularly if you can.**

Regular activity can make sleep better. It makes you physically tired. If possible, exercise in the late afternoon can be best.

- **Finally, new sleep habits take time to develop, sometimes weeks, so don't be disappointed if they do not work quickly. As long as you persevere, you will be able to establish a regular, refreshing sleep pattern.**

**REMEMBER DON'T LOSE SLEEP OVER LOSING SLEEP!**