

Night Owl...Sleep Well

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Rest and sleep in hospital

Some patients find it difficult to rest and sleep in hospital. Having other people around, noise from patients or noise from machines on the ward can make it very difficult to relax. Being in hospital can be very daunting and you may have worries about your care, treatment or things that are happening outside of hospital; perhaps related to family or your situation at home.

Staff involved in your care will want to know if you have worries or concerns so that they can help. You may just need some additional information or reassurance that will make you feel less worried. If you have any worries or concerns, please discuss them with a member of staff. If you need more support than this or need to speak to someone specific this can be arranged so, please don't be afraid to ask.

If you are struggling to rest or sleep, please let the nursing staff know as they may be able to help. There are some suggestions on the following pages that you may wish to try.

If light or noise is disturbing you, please ask the nursing staff for a **Night Owl Sleep Pack** containing an eye mask and a set of earplugs. These are only for use by one person, so please take them home and bring them in with you if you are a hospital inpatient again in the future.

Top tips for sleeping well in hospital

Everything about our physical and mental health is better when we sleep well. Here are a few tips that we hope you will find helpful:

- Move about as much as you can during the day as this will help you to sleep better
- Talk to staff about your usual getting ready for bed routine and bedtime, they will try to help you follow your usual pattern
- Discuss with the nurse looking after you when and why they might need to wake you during the night
- If you have a comforting item that helps you to sleep at home, ask staff whether you can bring it in
- Use earplugs and an eye mask to reduce noise and light. Please ask your nurse for some if you would find them helpful
- If you have a mobile phone and earphones, try using a relaxation, mindfulness or sleep app

- Avoid looking at your phone screens for an hour before sleep. The blue light reduces natural sleepiness and keeps us awake
- Sleep is hard to come by if you are hungry. Various snacks are available on the ward. Please don't hesitate to ask for something to eat
- Decaffeinated drinks are available to help you avoid caffeine. Caffeine keeps some people awake. Staff can also make you a drink using your own herbal or fruit teabags
- Let a nurse know if you are hot, cold, worried, uncomfortable or in pain at any point during the night
- Ask staff to adjust lighting or reduce noise – they really do want you to sleep well

Respect other patients' need to rest and sleep

Rest and sleep is an important part of recovery so please be considerate of the needs of your fellow patients, especially if they choose to rest or sleep at different times to you.

When the main lights are turned out please turn your screen brightness and volume down or use headphones if you have them.

Please talk quietly during the night. Talking with staff and other patients can help you to relax and make your stay a little more pleasant. If you are chatting to staff or patients, please be mindful of other patients who may be trying to rest or sleep.

Please keep noise and movement during the night to a minimum. If you need assistance to get to the bathroom or find something from your bedside locker during the night, please ask a member of staff to help. Use your call bell rather than calling out to avoid disturbing other patients.

Reduce noise from mobile phones

It is recognised that patients use their mobile phones whilst in hospital. For some this is an important part of keeping in touch with loved ones. If you do use your phone there are a few things you can do to reduce the risk of disturbing your fellow patients:

Please turn your phone to silent. If you do make or receive a call, try to do this out of earshot of other patients, especially during the night.

If you do need to make or receive a call at the bedside, please keep the call time to a minimum and speak quietly.

If you need to speak at length, please ask a member of the nursing team whether there is somewhere private for you to do so.

Relaxation

Relaxation is good for everyone, but if you are struggling to rest or sleep, relaxation exercises can be particularly helpful.

Practicing some relaxation exercises before you settle down is a great way to wind down, calm the mind and prepare for sleep.

Further information

If you have any questions or concerns please talk to a member of staff. You can also ask to speak to the matron in charge of your ward.

Alternatively, please take a look at Better Health every mind matters:

<https://www.nhs.uk/every-mind-matters/mental-health-issues/sleep/>



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