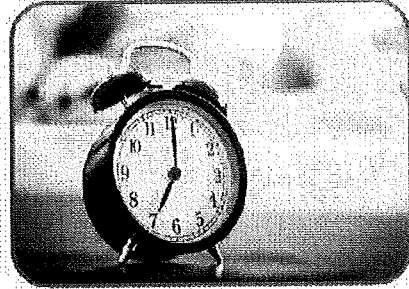


The Good Sleep Guide

Develop A Regular Sleep Pattern

- Go to bed only when sleepy. Do not use the bedroom for anything but sleep (or intimacy).
- Set the alarm for the same time every morning for seven days a week, at least until your sleep pattern settles down.
- Get up at the same time every day, even if you did not fall asleep until late.
- Do not sleep during the day.



Look After Yourself

- Try to keep yourself fit by doing light exercise in the late afternoon or early evening (later than this can disturb your sleep).
- Avoid caffeine after noon.
- Avoid nicotine, alcohol, exercise and big meals within 2 hours of bedtime.
- Reduce the amount of caffeine you drink, such as coffee, tea and some soft drinks. Try decaffeinated milk-based or herbal drinks. Consider complete elimination of caffeine from your diet.
- Only have a light snack for supper.
- Keep your sleep for bedtime, avoid falling asleep or snoozing in the chair.

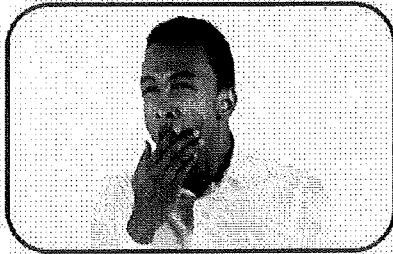


During The Evening

- Put the day 'to rest'. Think it through and use a notebook if needed. Tie up 'loose ends' in your mind and plan ahead.
- Have a regular routine before sleep, wind down during the course of the evening and avoid anything that is mentally demanding within 90 minutes of bedtime.



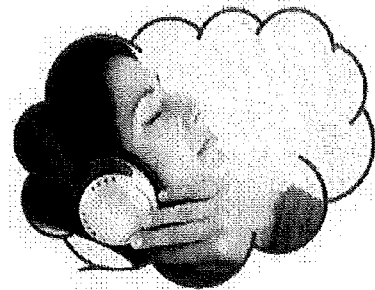
At Bedtime



- Go to bed when you are 'sleepy tired' and not before.
- Do not read or watch TV in bed.
- Turn the lights off when you get into bed.
- Relax and tell yourself that 'sleep will come when it's ready'. Enjoy relaxing even if you don't fall asleep at first.
- Do not try to fall asleep. Sleep cannot be switched on deliberately, but trying to do so may switch it off!

If You Have Problems Getting To Sleep

- Make sure your bed is comfortable and the bedroom is not too cold or too warm and is quiet (use earplugs if necessary).
- Try not to get upset or frustrated as sleep problems are quite common and they are not as damaging as you might think.
- If you are awake in bed for more than 20-30 minutes, get up and go into another room.
- Do something relaxing for a while and don't worry about tomorrow. Read, watch television or listen to quiet music and after a while you should feel tired enough to go to bed again.
- If not asleep within 20-30 minutes of returning to bed, repeat.
- Remember that people usually cope quite well even after a sleepless night. Only return to bed when you feel 'sleepy tired'.
- Developing a good sleep pattern may take a few weeks, however, you should remain confident that you **will** achieve it by working through this guide.
- Do not drink alcohol to help you sleep. It may help you fall asleep, but you will almost certainly wake up during the night.



More information can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>

You will find a mental wellbeing audio guide on overcoming sleep problems here:

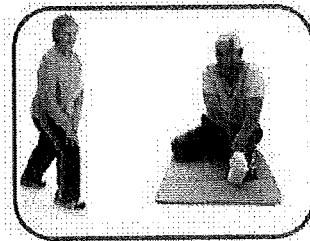
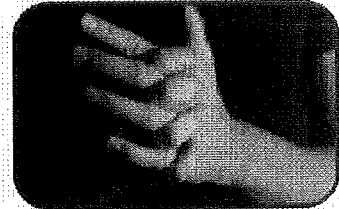
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/moodzone-mental-wellbeing-audio-guides/>

Adapted from All Wales Medicines Strategy Group: Educational Pack: Material to Support Appropriate Prescribing of Hypnotics and Anxiolytics across Wales by Wigan Borough CCG, with permission and thanks

The Good Relaxation Guide

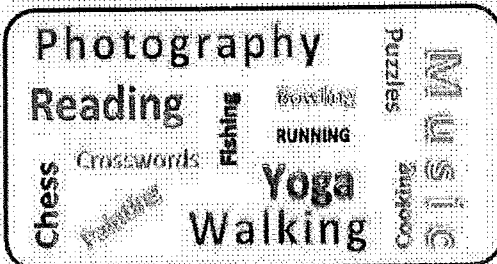
Dealing With Tension

- ◆ Finding and dedicating time to relax is essential. Give relaxation some of your best time, not just what's left over.
- ◆ Include relaxing things in your everyday life. Do not rush tasks or try too hard to resolve problems.
- ◆ Start a relaxation routine, but do not expect to learn without practice. Routines are available (audio recordings) which help to relieve muscle tension and teach you how to use breathing to help you relax.
- ◆ Try not to worry about tension symptoms, such as aches, stiffness, increased heart rate, sweating, stomach churning, etc.
- ◆ Keep fit and take part in regular exercise. Regular brisk walks or swimming can help relieve tension.
- ◆ Enjoy quiet moments, sit and listen to relaxing music, allow your mind to wander, picture yourself in pleasant situations.



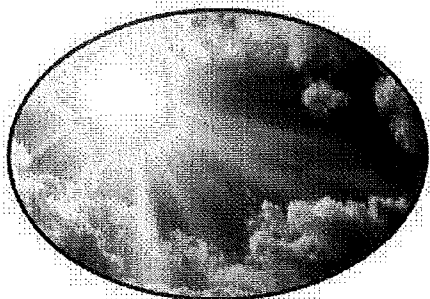
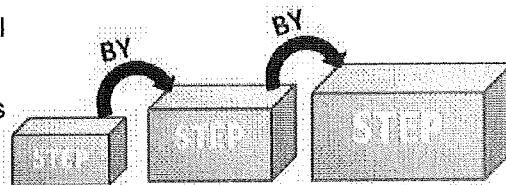
Dealing With Worry

- ◆ Accept that worrying is normal and sometimes it may be useful - everyone worries sometimes.
- ◆ Write down your worries and decide which ones are more important.
- ◆ Work out a plan of action for each worry.
- ◆ Share your worries with friends, relatives or your GP, who may be able to give you helpful advice.
- ◆ Mentally repeating a comforting phrase may help block out worrying thoughts.
- ◆ Reading, crosswords, hobbies and interests can all help keep your mind active and positive.



Dealing With Difficult Situations

- ◆ Accept and confront situations that make you feel more anxious.
- ◆ Take a step-by-step approach to help face things and places which make you feel tense.
- ◆ Write a plan of how you are going to deal with difficult situations.
- ◆ Regular practice will help you overcome your anxiety.



- ◆ Reward yourself when you do well and tell other people.
- ◆ As you face up to difficult situations your anxiety symptoms should become less troublesome and your confidence will grow.
- ◆ Everyone has good and bad days. Expect more good days as time goes on.

Planning

Put together a plan based on the information in this guide and practice regularly. If something does not work, do not worry, change it and see what happens. Remember that expert guidance and advice is available if you need more help.

Relaxing is about slowing things down. Everyone is different – experiment until you find your best way to relax. Remember ten minutes 'out' of a busy day is a good investment for your health and well-being.

More information can be found at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>

On the link below you will find a series of mental wellbeing podcasts or audio guides that you can listen to, to help you through times when your mood is low or you are feeling anxious. The series includes anxiety control training – guided relaxation; low mood and depression; overcoming sleep problems; low confidence and assertiveness; and unhelpful thinking.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/moodzone-mental-wellbeing-audio-guides/>

Adapted from All Wales Medicines Strategy Group: Educational Pack: Material to Support Appropriate Prescribing of Hypnotics and Anxiolytics across Wales by Wigan Borough CCG, with permission and thanks