



Today we will focus on

- Why sleep is important
- What happens while you sleep?
- Key factors for sleep
- Our 8 top tips for a good night's sleep



What's your sleep struggle?



Who has trouble getting to sleep?

Who has trouble staying asleep?

Who often looks at their mobile phone in bed?

Who regularly feels fatigued during the day?



You are not alone – sleep stats



- Worldwide **62% of adults** feel they don't sleep well when they go to bed
- **Women are 40%** more likely to have insomnia
- Large study cites **Finns as the world's best sleepers** and Japanese as the worst!
- **46% of people** look at their phone as the last thing they do before falling asleep



So how much do we need?

- Almost one third of our lives is spent sleeping (or trying to!)
- The amount of sleep you need is individual & varies at certain life stages
- Lack of sleep creates a 'sleep debt' or a 'sleep deficit'

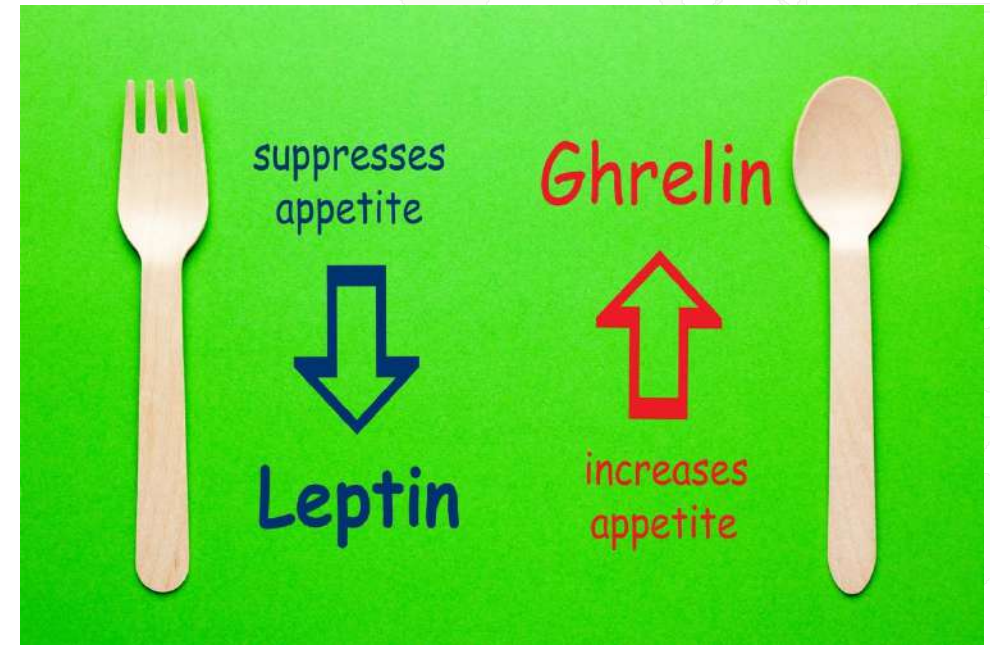




Why is sleep so important?

Not just feeling better after a good night's sleep! Sleep plays a crucial role in:

- Metabolism, appetite and insulin control
- Cardiovascular function
- Memory and learning
- Mood and attention
- Healing and repair
- Immune function





Sleep and brain health



- Sleep deprivation affects cognitive function
- Essential for consolidating memories
- Sleep disruption is linked with neurodegenerative disease
- Cleaning the brain



Sleep and immune function

- Lack of sleep affects our ability to fight off infection
 - ❖ <5 hours sleep = 4.5 x more likely to develop a cold
 - ❖ 7 hours = least likely
- Sleep helps our immune T Cells function better (fight viruses)





Sleep Cycle Stages



SLEEP STAGES

1 lightest sleep

2 light sleep

3 deep sleep

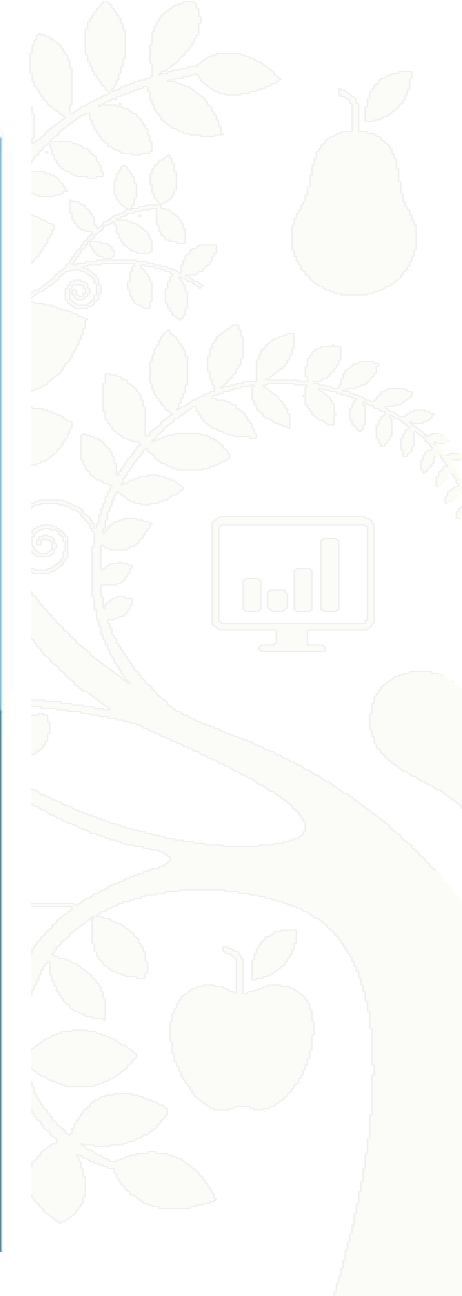
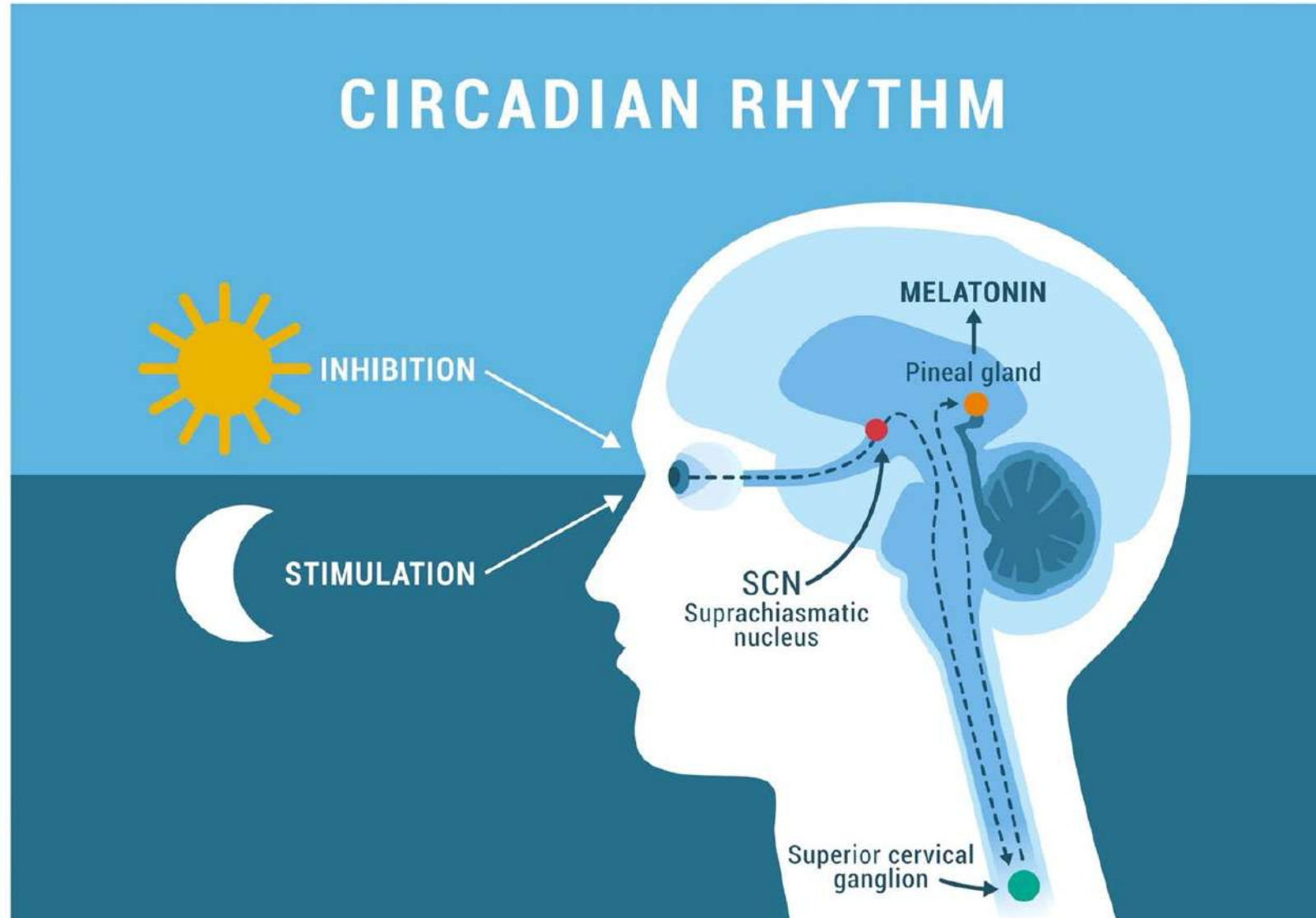
4 REM

— Non - rem sleep



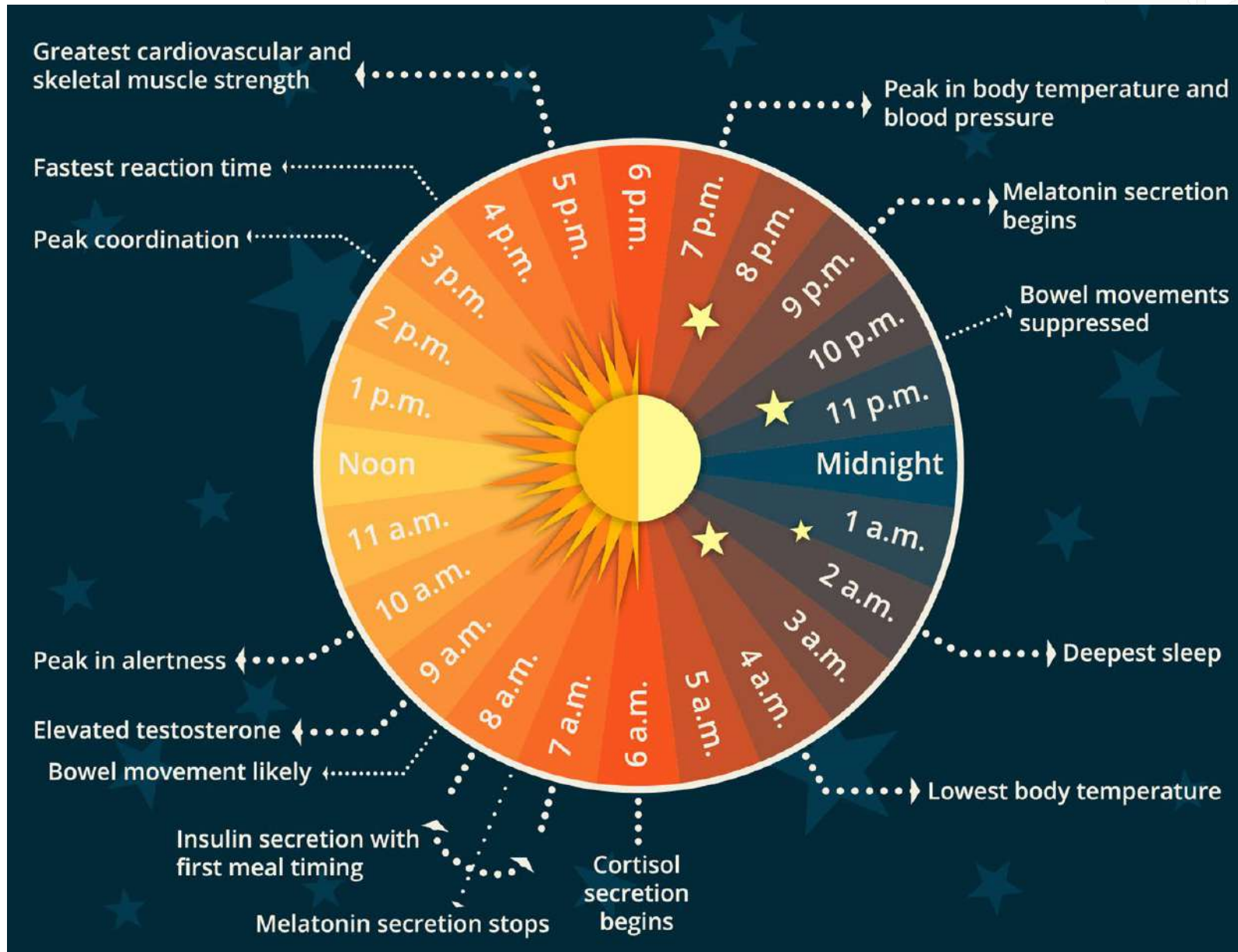
Key factors for sleep







Body Clock





8 Top tips for a good night's sleep

1. Practise good sleep hygiene
2. Target stress
3. Balance your plate
4. Include tryptophan rich foods
5. Ditch the stimulants
6. Cut back on alcohol
7. Exercise
8. Support digestion





1. Check sleep hygiene

- Natural light in the morning or try a light box
- Sleep in a darkened room
- Evaluate the comfort of mattress and pillows
- Go to bed and wake up around the same time or not
- Bedroom temperature
- Ditch the electronics





Screen time disrupts circadian rhythm



- 2-4 hours before bed start blue-blocking
 - ❖ Try blue light blocking glasses
 - ❖ Set night-time mode on screens
- Dim lighting in the house
- Switch to low-blue amber coloured lights or use anti-blue light filters



2. Embrace stress management



- Breathing exercises e.g. body scan technique, abdominal breathing or 4,7,8 breathing
- Mindfulness & meditation
- Reading books not watching screens
- Hot baths – lower core body temperature
- Ear plugs – quieten your environment
- Boundaries and breaks
- Try aromatherapy using essential oils
- Watch less news

4:6 Breathing

1. Sit comfortably in your chair
2. Close your eyes, if comfortable
3. Feel your feet grounded into the floor (relaxed), arms resting by your side
4. Gently **breathe in** through your nose, feeling your belly and diaphragm rise, to a **count of 4**
5. Gently **breathe out** through your nose, feeling your belly and diaphragm deflate, to a **count of 6**



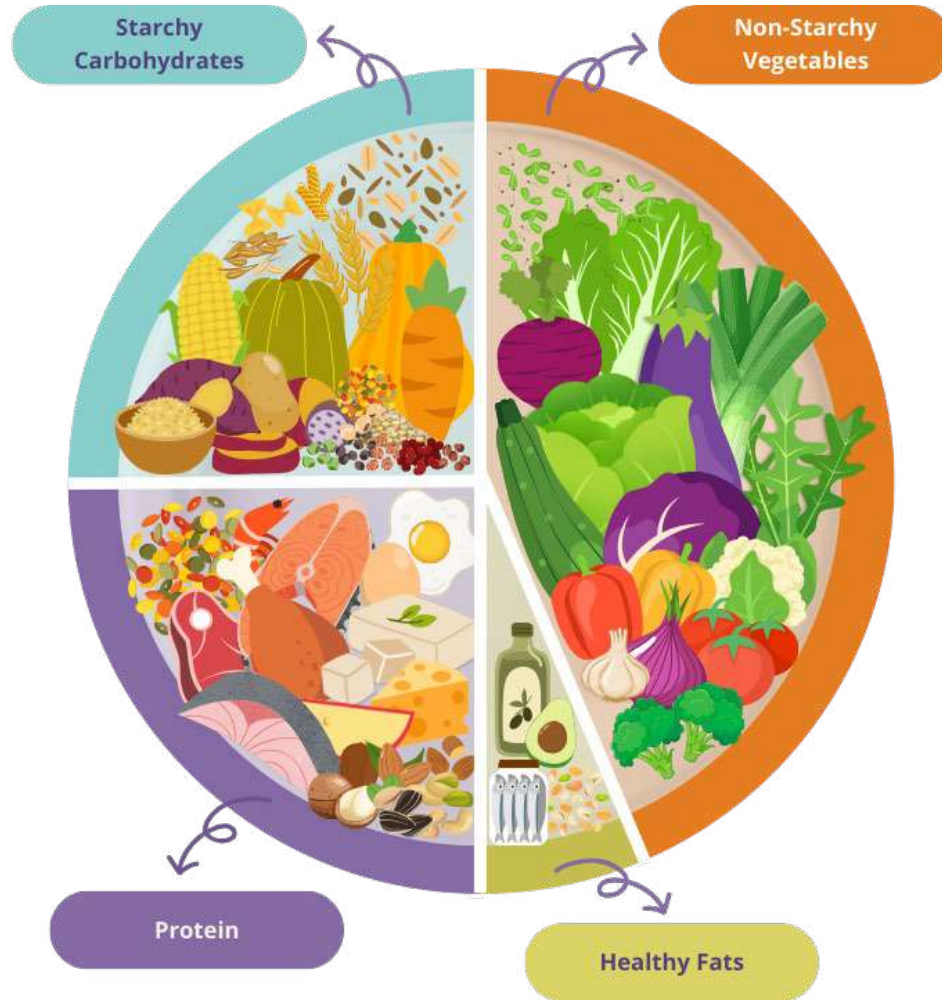
3. Balance your plate

Carbohydrates:

brown rice
potatoes
sweet potatoes
brown pasta
quinoa
couscous
brown bread

Protein:

fish
meat
tofu
tempeh
lentils
beans



Non-Starchy Vegetables:

avocado	watercress
broccoli	alfalfa
spinach	cucumber
kale	celery
runner beans	peppers
peas	fennel
courgette	mange tout
cabbage	asparagus
brussels sprouts	aubergine
cauliflower	bean sprouts
onion	endive
garlic	radish
tomatoes	rocket
mushroom	spring onions
lettuce	tenderstem

Healthy Fats:

avocado oil	oily fish
coconut oil	seeds
olive oil	nuts
butter	avocado



Bedtime snacks

- Oatcakes with any 100% nut butter or other protein e.g., cottage cheese
- Kiwi fruit - 1 or 2
- Small handful of walnuts or almonds
- Small bowl of porridge topped with flaxseed or nuts
- Montmorency sour cherry juice – drizzled on yoghurt or porridge





4. Regular tryptophan-rich foods

- **Meat** – chicken breast, turkey, beef, lamb
- **Fish** – shellfish, halibut, mackerel, cod
- **Shellfish** – lobster, prawns, crayfish, oysters
- **Legumes** – butter / kidney beans, black beans, lentils
- **Grains** - whole oats, buckwheat
- **Cheese** – parmesan, mozzarella, cottage cheese
- **Eggs**
- **Bananas**
- **Nuts & seeds** – chia, sesame, flax, sunflower, pistachios, cashews, almonds, hazelnuts





5. Reduce caffeine



- Raises stress hormones - cortisol & adrenaline
- Disrupts our natural sleep-wake cycle - blocks the action of adenosine
- Can take up to 10 hours to completely clear caffeine from the bloodstream



And don't forget other stimulants

Avoid:

- Chocolate
- Cigarettes
- Soft drinks
- Energy drinks
- Non-herbal teas
- Diet pills
- Check medications for caffeine





6. The myth of alcohol-induced sleep

Have you noticed you don't sleep well after you've had a few drinks?

- Prevents deep sleep
- Creates blood sugar imbalances
- Suppresses serotonin





7. Fresh air & exercise



- A natural boost to serotonin levels
- Outside exercise boosts endorphins & serotonin further
- Exercise improves sleep quality – but best not too close to bedtime



8. Support Digestion

Gut Microbiota

- Approx. 90% of the body's serotonin is produced in the digestive tract...
- So, it's vital to keep our gut happy!





Avoid heavy meals before bed



- Big & highly-refined / fatty meals fire up metabolism
- Body works hard to digest the food
- Lying down - interferes with digestion causing acid reflux - heartburn & indigestion



Other tactics - power nap?





Heavy or weighted blanket



Additional Resources

★ Top Tips for a Good Night's Sleep

- 1. Daylight**
Spend time in daylight for at least 30 minutes each day.
Get 15 minutes of bright natural sunlight every day.
- 2. Ditch Stimulants**
Caffeine, alcohol and nicotine can disrupt your sleep.
Avoid caffeine, alcohol and nicotine in the 4-6 hours before bed.
- 3. Balance Blood Sugars**
Avoid alcohol in the evening as it will cause blood sugar to drop during the night and wake you up.
For the same reason, minimise refined carbs and sugar with your evening meal.
- 4. Exercise**
Exercise provides a natural boost to the body's circadian rhythm, which helps regulate sleep quality at night.
Aerobic and resistance for 10-15 mins before bed.
4-5 hrs of resistance / HIIT training only 4-5 days a week to bedtime.
- 5. Good Sleep Hygiene**
Blue light from phones, computers and TV screens can disrupt the natural body clock by suppressing the production of sleep hormone.
Avoid for 1-2 hrs before bed.
Use blue light filters on your phone and TV.
Use your phone with a blue light filter.
Use your phone with a blue light filter.

Supporting Sleep
www.superwellness.co.uk

Angela Steel

RECIPES FOR SUCCESS

22 Tasty, healthy and easy recipes

The recipe section from 'Eat Your Way to the Top' - in full colour

Mediterranean halloumi & quinoa salad

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 cup quinoa, rinsed
- 120g halloumi, cut into slices
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- 100g baby spinach or rocket leaves, lightly dressed and drained
- 1 medium aubergine (eggplant), chopped
- 1 cup baby cucumber (cucumber), sliced
- 1 cucumber, chopped
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 1 cup pine nuts, chopped
- 1 cup pomegranate seeds

Method

Cook the quinoa in boiling water according to packet instructions, normally 10-12 minutes. Drain well and place in a serving bowl to cool.

For the halloumi slices dry with a kitchen towel and fry in a pan over a gentle heat for 5-7 minutes. Remove from the heat and cut into 1cm slices, then add to the quinoa. Add the chopped vegetables.

To make the dressing, whisk the olive oil, balsamic vinegar and lemon juice and stir into the quinoa. Mix gently and combine. Top with the chopped nuts and pomegranate seeds and serve.

Will keep in the fridge for 2 days.

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NUTRITION TIPS FOR SHIFT WORKERS

Our body is regulated by its circadian rhythm, which means it's programmed differently throughout a 24-hour cycle. Disrupting this rhythm can have an impact on metabolic, digestive, heart and mental health. The good news is that you can significantly reduce the health risks and improve your general wellbeing and energy levels by implementing these tips.

TIMING

- Avoid late evening meals (after 8 PM)
- Eat your main meal in the earlier part of the evening to fuel your body.
- Avoid an immediate meal between midnight and dawn.
- Avoid large meals for 4-6 hours prior to sleep.
- Eat breakfast before you sleep to avoid waking due to hunger.
- Drink an electrolyte solution in a 2-4 hour window before and after your shift.

NIGHT SHIFT SURVIVAL KIT

- Good bag of nuts (almonds, pistachios, or walnuts)
- Protein bars
- Electrolyte solution
- Water
- A small amount of caffeine

FOOD & HYDRATION

- Hydration is a cornerstone of the diet.
- Eat water throughout your shift and aim for 1.5-2 litres per day.
- Choose white or green tea instead of coffee to avoid stress hormones.
- Take your own food with you to avoid eating out.
- Avoid whole foods, especially those with a high glycemic index.
- Avoid sugar in your diet.

EXERCISE

- At least 100 minutes moderate aerobic activity and 20 strength training sessions a week.
- Exercise just before your shift is emerging.

SLEEP & RELAXATION

- Create a bedtime routine.
- Find a technique that works for you for breathing, meditation, yoga.
- Minimize blue light and screen time before bed.

HEALTH CHECKS

- Schedule your health checks.
- Annual blood tests.
- Annual blood tests.

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Oaty almond & cherry cookies

Makes around 16 cookies

Ingredients

- 100g ground almonds
- 100g almond milk
- 100g soft butter
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 10g dried cherries

Method

Pre-heat the oven to 180°C and line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

In a bowl add the ground almonds and milk. Stir the flour and baking powder together and add to the almond mixture.

In a separate bowl add the vanilla extract, milk, egg and egg. Add to the dry ingredients and combine until you have a sticky dough. Add the cherries and mix well.

Divide the mixture into 16 portions and roll into balls. Place on the baking sheets. Bake for 10-12 minutes and cooling to brown, around 10-12 mins.

Store in an airtight container.

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Stewed cinnamon apples

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 4 apples, cored and chopped (leaving the skin on)
- 100g ground cinnamon (or 1 cinnamon stick)
- 1 cup water (optional)
- 1-2 tablespoons vanilla, depending on how you like it

Method

Put the ingredients in a saucepan and cook, covered, over low heat until softened, around 20-25 minutes. Check regularly to make sure the apples don't stick to the bottom of the pan.

Divide the stew into 4 portions and top with yogurt. Sprinkle with mixed nuts and berries.

Will keep for a few days in the fridge or you can freeze in individual portions for later.

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Further Information

Books

- **Sleep** (Elite sports sleep coach and fan of naps!) by Nick Littlehales
- **Navigating Sleeplessness: How to Sleep Deeper and Better for Longer** (Sleep expert & Psychologist) by Dr. Lindsay Browning

Breathing techniques

- **Sleep support**
 - Abdominal breathing or diaphragmatic breathing
 - Body scan technique
- **Calming / support anxiety**
 - Box breathing
 - 4-7-8 breathing

Think it might be more serious?

- **Sleep Apnoea**
 - STOPBang Questionnaire:
https://britishsnoring.co.uk/stop_bang_questionnaire.php
- **Restless Leg Syndrome (RLS)**
 - Get deficiencies checked
 - Avoid alcohol, caffeine & nicotine
 - Ensure your exercising

Caffeine free teas with herbs to support sleep

- Yogi-Tea – Bedtime
- Pukka – Night-time
- Clipper – Snore & Peace



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