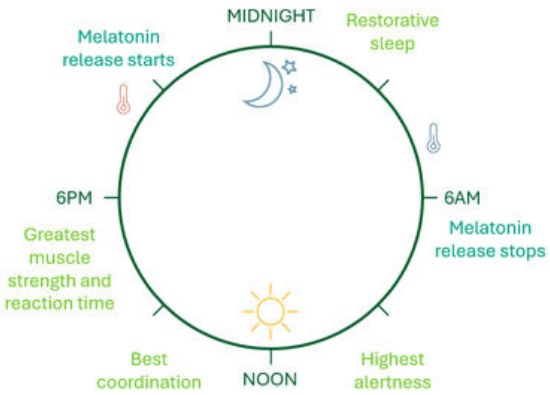
# Mental relaxation & sleep

## Why is sleep so important?

Restoration and repair: Sleep helps to refresh and rejuvenate the brain and body, promoting optimal cognitive function and emotional regulation.

Memory consolidation: Sleep plays a vital role in memory consolidation, the process by which newly acquired information is solidified and integrated into long-term memory. This is essential for cognitive functioning, problem-solving, and decision-making.




Emotional regulation: Adequate sleep helps to regulate emotions, reduce negative emotional responses, and promote a more balanced mood.

Stress reduction: Quality sleep is essential for regulating the body's stress response. A good rest helps to lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol and promote a sense of relaxation and wellbeing.

Cognitive functioning: Sleep enhances cognitive performance and productivity, while sleep deprivation can impair cognitive function, leading to difficulties with focus, memory, and decision-making.

Physical health: Poor sleep is associated with an increased risk of various physical health problems, including cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, and weakened immune function.

## How much do I need?

The amount of sleep needed varies depending on factors such as age, individual differences, and lifestyle. However, general recommendations for optimal sleep duration by age group are as (including naps!):

Newborns (0-3 months): 14-17 hours per day

Infants (4-11 months): 12-15 hours per day

Toddlers (1-2 years): 11-14 hours per day

Pre-schoolers (3-5 years): 10-13 hours per day

School-age children (6-12 years): 9-12 hours per day.

Teenagers (13-18 years): 8-10 hours per day.

Adults (18-64 years): 7-9 hours per day.

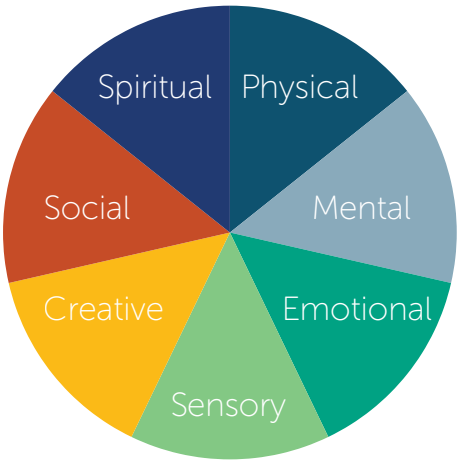
Older adults (65+ years): 7-8 hours per day.

It's important to note that these are general guidelines, and individual sleep needs may vary. Some people may feel well-rested and function optimally with slightly more or less sleep than the recommended range.

**However! The QUALITY of sleep is as important as the QUANTITY**

## The seven types of rest

Dr. Saundra Dalton-Smith identified seven different types of rest that are important to consider.




Physical rest Predominantly sleep but also yoga, leisurely walk, relaxing muscles.

Mental rest A break from problem solving and decision making.

Emotional rest Allowing self to express emotions in a healthy way.

Sensory rest Time away from electronic devices, time in nature.

Creative rest Expressing creativity through art, music, gardening etc

Social rest Embracing positive and healthy relationships, recognising stressful ones.

Spiritual rest Community involvement, faith, meditation etc.

## Tips for a good nights sleep

### Routine

Be consistent and stick to your pattern, even at weekends!

### Boundaries

Allow time away from work worries before you go to sleep, try some PMR or mindfulness

### Diet

Healthy body = healthy mind. Caffeine and alcohol before bed will make a peaceful night difficult

### Exercise

Make sure you allow rest time after exercise as your body temperature needs time to return to normal

### Screens

We all know downtime is important but also, realistically difficult. We all have a phone on charge next to the bed, but try placing a book there instead for a week.

### Temperature / Comfort

Start with ways you can gain some control. Share a bed? Try having two single duvets instead of one large one!

### What can I do to improve my mental relaxation and sleep?

Isle Listen is a trading name of MCH Psychological Services, a registered charity on the Isle of Man number 1024 and a registered organisational member of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy.

ISLE LISTEN
Because Minds Matter