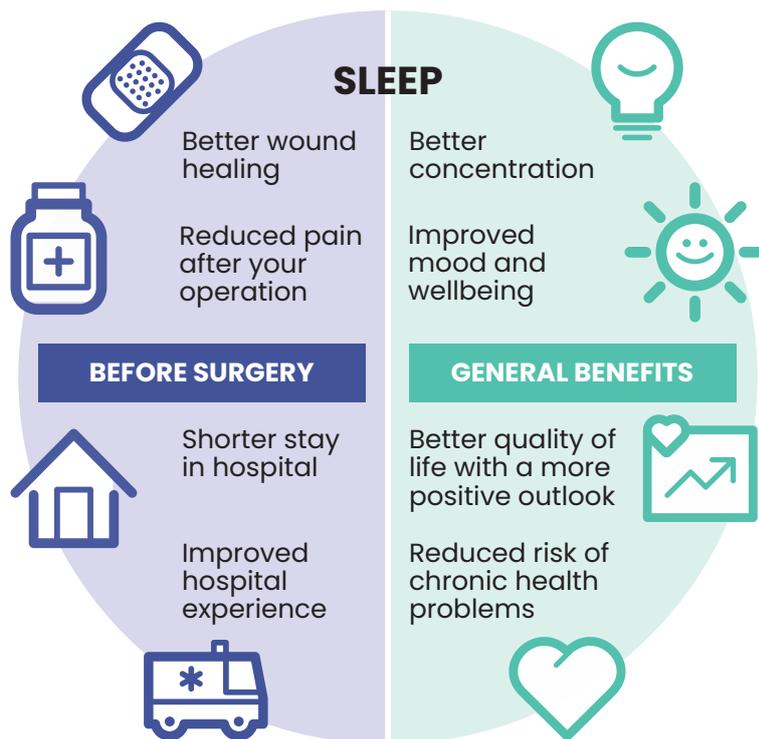


## WHY IS SLEEP IMPORTANT?

Our aim is the same as yours, to get you safely through your operation and experience a smooth and quick recovery.

There are many reasons to try to improve the quality of your sleep before your surgery. **Some of the benefits include** ➔



## IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

- There are 4 things crucial to being alive; eating, drinking, breathing and sleeping! Generally we spend approximately one third of our lives sleeping so it must be important.
- Good quality sleep appears important for our bodies to regenerate and repair properly.
- Sleep deprivation can lead to a range of health problems including heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes.

## SLEEP AND YOUR OPERATION

- Good quality sleep before, and after, your operation is very important to enable your body to recover successfully from the stress of surgery.
- It is normal for people to worry before surgery, which can lead you to feel anxious and stressed, both of which can lead to disturbed sleep or difficulty sleeping (insomnia). We therefore understand how important it is to provide people with support to try and maintain healthy sleep in the lead up to surgery so you have a more positive overall experience and speedier recovery.

## HOW DO I IMPROVE MY SLEEP?

On average most people need around 8 hours of good quality sleep every night to function properly. Some people will need more, and others less. The majority of sleep problems are related to 'bad habits' before bed or during the night, which sleep specialists call poor sleep hygiene. Examples of poor sleep hygiene include:

- Activities which stimulate your brain before bed and therefore reduce chances of getting to sleep e.g. using mobile phones or computers, smoking or drinking caffeine (tea, coffee) and energy drinks.
- Not having a regular bed-time routine or sleeping during the daytime.
- Lying in bed awake 'worrying' why you can't get to sleep.
- Drinking excess alcohol before bed which may lead to poor sleep quality and early waking
- Having the bedroom too hot or too light when you are trying to sleep.

Therefore taking some simple steps, which we can guide you through, can be very effective in improving the quality of your sleep in the lead up to surgery – see section on 'top tips' below. Taking regular exercise and getting fresh air during the day are also important to promote healthy sleep. Simple strategies to unwind and relax before bed time can also be very effective such as a warm bath, listening to relaxing music or reading. Some people also find that having the some gentle background noise such as the radio can help with getting to sleep.

Other resources you can explore for help are in the section 'useful links' below.

## TOP TIPS

- Stick to a regular sleep routine so you go to bed and get up at the same time each day.
- Keep good habits and sleep hygiene (see above section).
- Ensure you have a comfortable bed and a dark, cool and quiet room to sleep in. Sleep masks and earplugs can help!
- Try to exercise regularly, but not too late in the day.
- Cut down on caffeine, energy and sugary drinks.
- Avoid smoking as nicotine is a stimulant.
- Avoid over indulgence of food and alcohol.
- Any worries you have from the day, write down and plan time for tackling these the next day before getting into bed.
- Avoid daytime naps.
- If you can't sleep, get up and do something relaxing until you feel sleepy.

## USEFUL LINKS

**NHS sleep:** <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/>

**NHS top tips:** <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/10-tips-to-beat-insomnia/>

**NHS app library:** <https://www.nhs.uk/apps-library/filter/?categories=Sleep>

**NHS Insomnia:** <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/insomnia/>

**Sleep station:** This is an NHS approved sleep improvement programme that is designed to help people beat insomnia. It works on a self referral basis. You can simply fill in an online form to gain access. [https://www.sleepstation.org.uk/nhs\\_options/](https://www.sleepstation.org.uk/nhs_options/)