

Support Guide

Sleep





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Sleep Sleep keeps us healthy and functioning well. Sleeping lets the body and brain repair, restore, and reenergize. If you don't get enough sleep, you might experience side effects like poor memory and focus, weakened immunity, and mood changes. Most adults need 7 to 9 hours of sleep every day

Sleeping difficulties Do you experience disturbed sleeping? Do you feel fatigued or do you have trouble with altered performance? Possible causes could be:

- Your state of mind – anxiety, depression, stress, worry, anger or grief can effect your sleep.
- Changes in your life – big steps such as moving home, changing city, or starting university can be difficult to process.
- Environment – such as noise, lighting, discomfort and time zone change.
- Pain can impact your body and mind.
- Medical conditions – heart problems, high blood pressure, breathing difficulties, digestive problems and many more can effect sleep
- Caffeine/stimulants – intake or medication such as diuretics, slimming pills, betablockers can disturb your sleep patterns

Try to avoid

- Taking stimulants to keep you awake.
- Sleeping during the day no matter how tired you are.
- Going to bed when you're stressed, wound up or not ready.
- Eating, drinking or smoking when you get up during the night.
- Worrying yourself into not sleeping.
- Getting angry with yourself if you can't sleep.
- Using computers, tablets and smart phones one hour before going to bed.

The Sleep Foundation Organization

suggest these helpful tips:

✓ Creating a Sleep-Inducing Bedroom

In designing your sleep environment, focus on maximizing comfort and minimizing distractions. A high quality mattress, pillow and bedsheets can help. Excess light exposure can throw off your sleep, use curtains or a sleep mask. Keeping noise to a minimum is essential, if you can't eliminate it, use white noise, a fan or earplugs/headphones. If possible keep a stable, slightly cool temperature. Give calming pillow scents such as lavender a try

✓ Optimizing your sleep schedule

To start with try to set a fixed wake up time and stick with it. Use caution with naps, try to avoid napping if possible. If you nap for too long or too late in the day, it can throw off your sleep schedule. If you must, the best time to nap is shortly after lunch in the early afternoon, and the best nap length is around 20 minutes. Whenever possible, give yourself extra time before bed to wind down and get ready for sleep.

✓ Crafting a pre-bed routine

It's natural to think that problems with sleeping start when you go to bed. In reality, though, the lead-up to bedtime plays a crucial role in preparing you to fall asleep quickly and effortlessly. Quiet reading, low-impact stretching, listening to soothing music, and relaxation exercises are examples of ways to get into the right frame of mind for sleep. Avoid bright light during this period. Try to disconnect from devices.

✓ Fostering healthy pro-sleep habits during the day

Daily exercise has across-the-board benefits for health, and the changes it initiates in energy use and body temperature can promote solid sleep. Most experts advise against intense exercise close to bedtime because it may hinder your body's ability to effectively settle down before sleep. Keep an eye on your caffeine intake and avoid it later in the day when it can be a barrier to falling sleep. Don't eat before bed. This can keep you awake as your body will be still digesting the food.



Exposure to smoke, including secondhand smoke, has been associated with a range of sleeping problems. For example longer periods of falling asleep and fragmented sleep.

What to do if you can't fall asleep

Relaxation Techniques—Controlled breathing, mindfulness meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, and guided imagery are examples of relaxation methods that can help.

Don't 'stew' in bed—You want to avoid a connection in your mind between your bed and frustration from sleeplessness. This means that if you've spent around 20 minutes in bed without being able to fall asleep, get out of bed and do something relaxing in low light. Avoid checking the time during this time. Try to get your mind off of sleep for at least a few minutes before returning to bed.

A daily sleep journal can help you keep track of how well you're sleeping and identify factors that might be helping or hurting your sleep. If you're testing out a new sleep schedule

Try to be break down your solution

You don't have to do all the things at once, you can start with one little step at the time, and if it doesn't work for you try another method. Don't rush the results; our body takes time to adapt with changes and habits.

Where to get further help?

Speak to a close friend, a family member, your module leader in your faculty student office. Or talk with a doctor if you feel that your sleeping difficulties have a medical trigger. Medical staff are in the best position to offer detailed advice for people with serious difficulties sleeping. Talk with your doctor if you find that your sleep problems are worsening, persisting over the long-term, affecting your health and safety.

Speak to someone at **the BUE Student Hub Counselling Service** where advisors can help you with the techniques above.

You can pass by our offices at the BUE Library Lower Floor.

Not on campus and want more information? You can contact us anytime via our email address **thestudenthub@bue.edu.eg**

The student Hub is a safe, friendly and free space for you. We are here to help you. We are listening.

