

Sleep is Important

Lets understand what makes us fall asleep and how we can improve our ability to fall asleep

There are 4 main factors that make us fall sleep:

- Melatonin
- Cortisol
- Adenosine
- Internal body clocks.

Below we will learn more about these four factors and how you can regulate your own body into a better and easier sleep.



What actually makes us sleep?

Melatonin

Melatonin is a hormone which increases during darkness. Light causes production to stop. Melatonin synchronizes your sleep-wake cycle with night and day.



Cortisol

Cortisol is a hormone often labelled 'the stress hormone'. It is usually high in the morning and lowest in the evening. Cortisol helps the body wake up. When we are stressed, high levels of cortisol make it hard to fall asleep.



Adenosine

Adenosine slows down the neural (brain) activity and causes sleepiness. For every hour we are awake, adenosine levels gradually increase and then decrease during sleep. High levels of adenosine give us that sleepy feeling. It's our body telling us it's time to switch off.



Internal Body Clock

Your internal body clock or circadian rhythm, is a biological system determining your body's need for sleep.

This means some of us are naturally early types and some of us late types. Early types will feel more productive in the first half of the day and prefer to sleep and wake up earlier. Late types feel more productive and engaged in the second half of the day and tend to cope a lot better with later shifts.

Early types may struggle in having a lie in. Late types may struggle when trying to fall asleep early. Living against your internal body clock can make it harder to sleep. Our work and social patterns may lead us to live against our body clock.

The success to falling asleep easily and having a good sleeping pattern is aligning all of these things at the same time. On the next page we will explain how to do that.

How can all of this help me sleep?

Melatonin

Get as much natural light as you can during the day! At least couple hours before bed try to limit as much light as you can such as tv, smartphones, computers



Cortisol

Understanding how to regulate your stress levels before sleep is important. Try to decompression methods such as deep-breathing exercises, a walk or hot bath can help lower levels of cortisol before sleep



Adenosine

Try to avoid drinking caffeinated drinks in the afternoon. This can throw off your adenosine levels and make it harder for you to sleep at night. Even if you are able to fall asleep after drinking caffeine it may affect your sleep quality



Internal Body Clock

Listening to your internal body clock is vital to your sleep. Try to create a sleep pattern that works with your schedule, this will help your body create a sleep pattern, one that allows you to stay awake on the job and fall asleep faster when you get home. As its not always possible to align our schedules around our body clock, having a consistent sleep and nap routine can help. Ensuring you go to bed and wake up at the same time every day and have a set nap time.

If you're continuously struggling with your sleep - please get in touch with your GP for further advice and information.

Improve your health through sleep!

Learn more about your sleep, watch the videos playlist and get tips on improving your health through your sleep on the dedicated metroline portal

LEARN MORE

