

Sleep

Getting enough good sleep is an essential part of a healthy, balanced lifestyle. Regular poor sleep puts you at risk of serious medical conditions, including obesity, heart disease and diabetes – and it shortens your life expectancy.

It's now clear that a solid night's sleep is essential for a long and healthy life.

Poor sleep means that our body is not able to heal and repair itself. Symptoms like pain are made worse when we do not get enough good quality sleep.

Why is sleep good for you?

- Sleep has important effects on growth, especially in early infancy
- Sleep boosts immunity
- Sleep helps manage a healthy weight
- Sleep boosts mental health and wellbeing – it helps your mood
- Sleep boosts alertness and attention – it helps you/your child focus in school
- Sleep boosts learning and memory
- Sleep reduces the risk of diabetes and heart disease
- Sleep increases fertility

Many people can also feel tired all the time. This can be called fatigue.

We will all feel tired from time to time but if you/your child is tired all the time you may want to work out why.

It can be helpful to think about if there are any parts of your life that you find particularly tiring – it may be work or family related. Have there been any specific events that have started this feeling. It may stem from a major life event like illness of a family member, school/exam stress or losing someone you love.

Your GP would look to see if there is a physical or psychological cause to your/your child's tiredness but there are a number of things you could do to help yourself/your child. You might not need to see your GP!

Ways to improve your sleep and beat tiredness

- Get moving – regular exercise decreases feeling of tiredness in the long-run
- Plan your day and pace yourself to avoid the boom and bust activity cycle
- A regular bedtime routine helps your/your child's body to prepare for sleep
- Eat regular, healthy meals and try not to eat too close to bedtime
- Don't have drinks with caffeine in them
- Don't use technology too close to bedtime – ideally, these devices should not be used in the hours before bed and should be removed from your child's bedroom in order to create an environment that your child associates with sleep
- Practice mindfulness or relaxation

This information has been printed from CHILDREN MOVE BETTER GWENT

Additional links and information can be found on our website: <https://children.movebettergwent.nhs.wales>