

sleep

Believe it or not, cutting down on your sleep by only one hour a night can have a dramatic effect on both your physical and mental performance the next day.

For most people, achieving anything less than 8 hours sleep per night can result in feeling sleepy the following day, you may also experience elevated stress levels. These elevated stress levels may make it difficult to lose weight due to factors such as raised cortisol levels and lower HGH secretion during the night.

Many shift workers are prone to sleep deprivation due to their work hours continually changing and their rest hours colliding with the 'norm'. For this reason, it is very important that shift workers develop a routine that allows their body to recognise rest time.



During your working day, ensure you consume at least two litres of water and limit your caffeine to no more than three caffeinated drinks. You may find it helpful not to have any tea or coffee five hours prior to going to bed.

Develop a routine for bed time

Whether you go to bed at 10pm or 10am you will find that your body will rest sooner and you will fall asleep more easily if you develop a routine. Here are some tips that you can try at home to encourage a restful sleep. Remember it may take up to two weeks before your body gets used to the routine:

- Add relaxing essential oils such as lavender to your bath before crawling into your pyjamas.
- Camomile tea can act as a mild natural sedative when taken before bedtime.
- Add a few drops of lavender or geranium oil to your pillowcase or in an oil burner prior to bed.
- Take time to de-stress, listen to music, read a book or do a cross word puzzle.
- Try to go to bed at a similar time each day.
- Plan your meals in advance so you can come home and cook your last meal of the day without any stress – with all the ingredients at hand.
- Ensure your bedroom is comfortable for you to sleep in. Your bedroom should have plenty of fresh air and be kept at a comfortable temperature. If your rest time is during daylight hours invest in a good set of blinds. Many people find that removing electrical appliances from the bedroom vastly improves sleep patterns.

Remember your human growth hormone is responsible for the breaking down of body fat and building muscle mass. The human growth hormone is at its most active whilst you are sleeping.

Reference: http://www.blackmores.com/news/news_detail.asp?cat=134&art=689
<http://www.infoem-ed.com/projectdetails.asp?is=34>