

Sleep

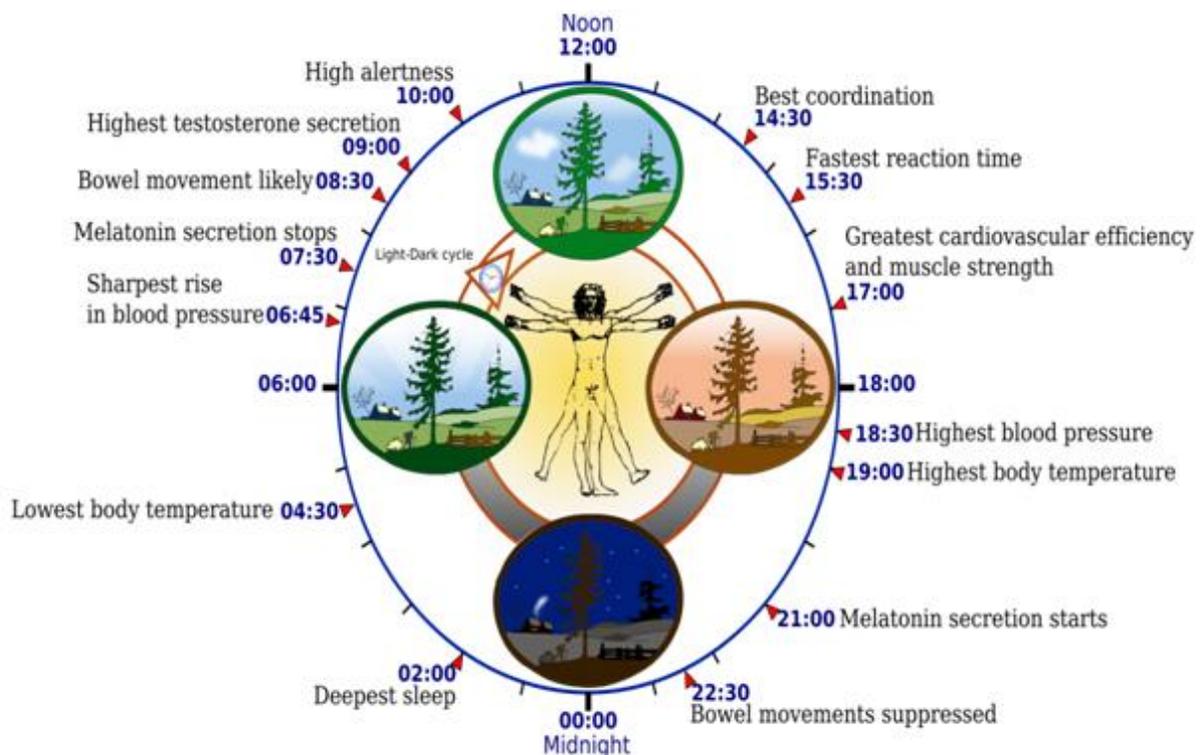
Ok first things first, we need to take the STRESS out of sleep! We are all under the impressions that sleep is incredibly important, and it is....but it's not going to be helpful to your sleep quality to be feeling stressed out and anxious about it!

There are 2 ways to think about sleep:

1. Monophasic – one block of sleep
2. Polyphasic – multiple blocks of sleep

Monophasic sleep is essentially sleeping throughout the night and staying awake for the rest of the day. Polyphasic sleep is where you schedule in 1-2 other sleep periods during the afternoon to early evening.

Did you know that our bodies respond to light and temperature? To gauge your sleep we must have an understanding of our natural circadian rhythms. We also have different sleep needs in the winter and summer, our bodies are set up to sleep more when it is dark, thus in the winter it goes without saying that we might be needing more sleep.



In the modern world we don't account for this really, we are on on on 24/7 very stressed and functioning using caffeine and pro plus.

As with everything that I have taught you so far, it's about trying something out, monitoring how it works for you and adjusting based on the results. If your lifestyle allows for this, then play around with it and figure out what works best for you!

The biggest and first thing that you can do is to set yourself a constant wake time, your body wants a pattern and it will tell you what the best time is for you to wake up naturally. Mine is 7am and from here we can then work out our sleep cycles. Ideally we would want to be as regular as possible for sleep habits, sleeping in late can put your body into a jetlag like state and will affect other systems and your energy and health. Make sure you are paying attention to your sleeping habits and put them at the forefront of your healthy new lifestyle for further benefits.

Plan for the next 7 days

Like you plan your meals using the meal planner so that you know what you will be eating and when (*for the most part*) take an extra 3-4 minutes to plan out your weekly sleep habits. This might seem a bit excessive but it will do you a world of good

Ideally we need to get in 5 sleep cycles of 90minutes so we can look ahead at the week and see what commitments we have going on and work around this! This is so valuable and so simple.

If you figure out that your body likes to wake up at 6am, you have to work backwards in 90 minute blocks so with this example we have 430am, 3am, 130am, midnight, 1030pm thus your optimal sleep will take place between 1030pm to 6am provided that you sleep all the way though and don't wake up for any reason.

Waking at the end of a sleep cycle is much healthier than starting awake half way through, if you know that you are travelling or have events going on etc it would be really wise to plan your sleep cycles so that you get as many full cycles as possible. Should you miss out on a cycle or 2 you can plan these into the next day to ensure that you are topping up. However it is not as good as getting them in at night time simply because of daylight exposure etc.

Pre sleep

Set aside a 90 minute block of time in the evening to focus on pre sleep habits. This can include:

- Emptying bladder and bowels if needed
- De-cluttering your surroundings (organising)
- Downloading your thoughts/to do list onto paper
- Filling in a gratitude log
- Meditating
- Stretching/yoga
- Warming your body with a quick warm shower
- Ensuring your sleep environment is cool around 18 degrees
- Closing curtains and blackout blinds
- Covering up any blinky lights from devices
- Reducing screen time at least 1 hour before sleep time
- Using low lighting/salt lamps instead of light bulbs

- Setting your lumie alarm clock to wake you up with light

Post sleep

When we wake up it is likely to be in darkness due to our blackout blinds, so investing in a lumie alarm clock is a fantastic idea. The body can then wake up and be stimulated by the light emitted from the clock:

<http://www.lumie.com/>

The next thing really then is to throw open the curtains to get natural light into your eyes. If you can get outside at this point, even better!

After this it is really up to you to develop a routine that works best for you but I would suggest that it includes:

1. Emptying bladder and bowels (you don't want to be suppressing this as this will not be healthy)
2. Hydrate
3. Fuel body with great nutritious breakfast (take your time)
4. Move your body (walk/stretch/yoga)

Remember that your PRE SLEEP starts from the moment that you wake up!

Make the first 90minutes of your day all about you and your needs if this is possible! That does not mean that you have to be isolated from others, simply that you don't do anything particularly mentally challenging for those 90 minutes.

The last thing that we want to be doing is waking up to a screeching alarm, grabbing a cereal bar and running out the door to go to work. Sleep and stress must be managed otherwise you won't be able to make the body gains that you want.

Your mattress and sleep position

If you are right handed you should be sleeping on the right side of the bed and vice versa for lefties! The best sleeping position is the foetal position onto the opposite side that is your dominant side. So me being a righty, should naturally curl up on my left side, this stems from cave men times when we slept outside in the wild and needed our dominant side available to fend off attacks.

Choosing the right mattress can be confused by those pesky sales people, when you are next replacing your mattress ignore the store staff who will try to up sell you the best mattress for their commission, and just go and lie in the foetal position on each mattress until you find one that fits the bill. The best test is simply to curl up and see what gap appears between your head and the bed, if it is more than 6-7cm (or two flat hands) then it's not the right one for you.

We need this alignment when we sleep so that we are able to breathe properly, disturbed breathing equals disturbed sleep!

Bear in mind that some of the top athletes in the world actually sleep on a sheet of foam on the floor and not in a big fancy springy bed because they figured out that that was going to be best for them!

Make it work for you

We all have an individual need and figuring out what works best for you will be valuable. Sleep cycles occur every 90 minutes so being aware of this when you plan your sleep times is going to be key. Ideally we want to be getting 5 full sleep cycles every night (*or during the day if we need to top it up*).

It IS important to get this right not just for your energy and health, but it will save you a tonne of time. We are always complaining about how time goes to fast, that we don't have enough time to exercise or prepare food...well if you maximise your sleep quality and stop wasting time on poor quality sleep then you will automatically get some time back to allocate to other areas in your life!

Come winter time, don't forget that you might need to start experimenting again and figuring out that perhaps an extra 90 mins in bed does you a world of good.

Try, monitor, adjust and adapt!

Sleep is one of your most valuable tools to help with weight loss and health, treat it well!

Supplements and gadgets

Use Amazon for more competitive pricing

1. Ideally we want to be nose breathing when we sleep, classic mouth breathers are generally the snorers, this great little gadget can really help with this: <http://www.rhinomed.global/>
2. For more information invest in the book 'the oxygen advantage' and come to terms with how important breathing and sleep really are
3. Use cherry active - <http://www.cherryactive.co.uk/collections/cherryactive> - this helps to physically recover in pre sleep
4. The human charger - <http://www.humancharger.com/> - a funky little device that can overcome jetlag and stop you from falling into an unwelcome inappropriate slumber. Great if you have a day of meetings/lectures etc. for a good explanation and summary on this here is a great article: <https://bengreenfieldfitness.com/2015/06/what-is-the-human-charger/>

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