

Are you struggling with sleep?



Before using sleeping tablets, have you tried:



Recording your sleep

- Keeping a sleep diary can help you find simple ways to improve sleep



Simple lifestyle interventions

- Exercise during the day and introduce a screen-free wind-down period before bed



Creating an environment right for sleep

- A comfortable, calm, cool, quiet, dark room with minimal disruptions is best



Reducing caffeine and nicotine intake

- Avoid caffeinated drinks in the evening, and stay below 5 cups/day. Less is best.
- Decaffeinated coffee still contains caffeine (20% that of a normal coffee)
- One can of coke contains the same amount of caffeine as an espresso shot
- Nicotine use shortens total sleep time and makes it harder to fall asleep



Reducing alcohol consumption

- Alcohol makes it feel easier to get to sleep, but causes poor quality, broken sleep



Pharmacist medication review

- Some prescribed medicines can make you sleepy during the day or prevent sleep at night. A pharmacist can review timings of medication to help you sleep better.



Natural light exposure

- Sunlight regulates our body clock. Try to spend time outside every single day. Artificial light does not have the same effect as natural light.



Setting a regular wake up time, and only going to bed when sleepy

- Getting up at the same time each day helps your body clock stay regular, even if you feel tired. Staying in bed when unable to sleep can worsen insomnia.

Sleeping tablets can aid poor sleep, but long term use causes side effects. They should only be used for a maximum of 2-4 weeks. If you are taking them for longer periods of time, contact your GP.

Sleeping tablets should only be used when absolutely necessary. You should attempt sleep without them wherever possible, to reduce the chance of tolerance and dependence.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for insomnia (CBTi) is as effective as sleeping tablets in the short-term, and more effective long-term.

Further resources including a sleep diary are available at: www.cntw.nhs.uk/smartersleep

*For further information on CBTi please visit: <https://www.cntw.nhs.uk/services/first-step/what-does-first-step-offer/cbt-i-cbt-for-insomnia/>

