

“Why do I feel exhausted during the day, but as soon as I get into bed I just can’t fall asleep?”

This doesn’t seem to make sense in practical terms. Surely, if you feel tired, you should be able to fall asleep when we get into bed? But for a significant number of people this isn’t the case, and getting into bed triggers a host of anxieties. So how can you help yourself ease into sleep mode?

1 Caffeine and Alcohol We all know that caffeine is a stimulant and in many people inhibits sleep. But did you know that caffeine can stay in your system for up to 8 hours? So having a caffeinated drink in the afternoon can impact on how you get to sleep. Similarly, while alcohol may help you feel sleepy, it interferes with the quality of your sleep.

2 Naps It may seem that a quick nap after lunch can’t possibly interfere with your night sleep, but indeed it can. If you simply can’t get through the day without taking a nap, maximise at half an hour and take it before 3pm.

3 Late Meals Throwing heavy, rich food down you close to bedtime can trigger digestion problems and heartburn. Clearly, not too helpful when you’re trying to get to sleep.

4 Regular Exercise We are advised to take regular exercise for our health and energy levels. But guess it can help us sleep better too. And if you’re a non-exercise lover ... just 30 minutes of exercise a few times a week can make a difference, but make sure it’s not too close to bedtime.

5 Screens How many times have you heard ‘no screens before bedtime’? It seems almost inconceivable to not check our phones, send emails or watch TV before bed – but even a mindless TV programme can impact. So the truth is it’s not what you’re doing or watching on the screen that matters - it’s the blue light emitted from all screens that suppresses the production of melatonin, our natural sleep hormone. So change your habit and put another one in its place - read a book, listen to a podcast or music, or take a relaxing bath.

6 Tick Tock Clock-watching can induce high levels of anxiety, so if you need to use an alarm to get up in the morning, turn your clock around so it is not facing you and forget about what time it is. And ticking clocks ... that’s got to be the most annoying sound ever when you’re trying to get to sleep!

Book an Adult Sleep Plan from The Sleep Works

We work with you to build a personalised and manageable sleep plan containing both short and long-term goals. Find out more at thesleepworks.co.uk or email info@thesleepworks.co.uk