

# Healthy Living Focus

## The Power of Sleep



Hello and welcome to the healthy living focus, in this edition we are going to take a look at the power of sleep. A good night's sleep may be something few take for granted, but for those who cannot drift off into a gentle slumber it can have a negative impact upon wellbeing, and also long term health consequences. Here, we will explore the importance of sleep, learn how much sleep we need for a healthy lifestyle, and discuss tips to achieve that regular sleep pattern and really feel the benefits of the power of sleep!

### How much sleep do we need?

Most people need 7-8 hours' sleep a night, but some need more and some need less. What is important is to find out how much sleep you need- and try to achieve it.

The general rule is that if you wake up feeling tired- you probably aren't getting enough sleep!

Sleeping less than 7-8 hours per night is linked to an increased risk of heart disease and impacts day to day wellbeing.

One in Three people struggle to sleep soundly at night.

### The Benefits of Sleeping Soundly

- Having a good, regular sleeping pattern is linked to maintain a healthy weight.
- Sleep boosts mental wellbeing, reducing feelings of low mood and irritability.
- Sleep can help to reduce diabetes, and the chances of developing other serious conditions such as heart disease.
- Sleep can boost immunity- helping to fight off nasty bugs.



### Create a sleep friendly space

- Turn off the lights
- Block out excess light by closing the curtains or using a blackout blind
- Keep noise to a minimum- even using ear plugs may help
- Turn off the TV and devices
- Make sure your bed is comfortable, the right mattress and thickness of duvet can all help to get a good night's sleep!

### Tips to wind down for a peaceful sleep

1. Eat dinner at least 2 hours before going to bed to allow for digestion
2. Enjoy a warm bath
3. Write a to do list for the next day, to clear the mind
4. Read a book or listen to a relaxation CD
5. Enjoy a warm drink before bed such as warm milk or herbal tea
6. Snack on natural sleep remedies such as walnuts, almonds and bananas

DO NOT SMOKE. Nicotine is a stimulant and people who smoke take longer to fall asleep and often have poor quality sleep!



Less of these..

**Avoid Coffee and other caffeine sources before bed time such as coke and chocolate**

**Avoid screens for at least an hour before going to bed. The white light from phones, TV's or Ipads may have a negative effect on sleep**



**Regular exercise is proven to help improve sleep!**

Moderate exercise such as swimming or walking can help to reduce tension and relax muscles.





## Expert Support

Visit <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/sleep-and-tiredness/how-to-get-to-sleep/?tabname=tiredness-and-fatigue> to explore the issue of sleep, look at fatigue, and explore the possibility of medical reasons for lack of sleep. If you have concerns always visit a GP.

## Recipe of the week!

### Mixed Bean Chilli with Wedges

#### Ingredients (serves 4)

- 4 medium baking potatoes, unpeeled, each cut into 8 wedges
- Low calorie spray oil
- 1 red onion, chopped
- 1 yellow pepper, chopped
- 1 tbsp Cajun spice mix
- 2 x 410g/14oz cans mixed pulses in water, rinsed and drained
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 150ml vegetable stock
- 4 tbsp fat free natural yoghurt



#### Method

1. Heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 7.
2. Chop potatoes into chunky wedges.
3. Spray a baking tray with plenty of spray oil. Spread out the chopped potato wedges in a single layer on the tray. Cook for 40-45 mins, turning halfway, until tender and golden brown.
4. Meanwhile, spray a casserole dish with the oil and fry the onion and pepper for 5 mins. Add Cajun spice, pulses, tomatoes and stock.
5. Cover and simmer for 15-20 mins. Remove bean chilli from the heat and ladle the chilli into bowls, top each with 1 tbsp fat free yoghurt and serve with the wedges.

#### Tips

- Serve with a green side salad for extra vitamins!
- Portion out remaining meals into tupperware boxes for instant meals for the next few days!

Meet our healthy living coordinator, Claire. Who is responsible for our newsletter and healthy living project.

If you have any queries, would like to suggest a feature for our future newsletters, or would like support and advice around issues raised here, please contact Claire at [healthyliving@nortonhousingandsupport.org.uk](mailto:healthyliving@nortonhousingandsupport.org.uk)

