

# Catch your ZZZZZZZZZZZS...



HOW DO YOU KNOW WHETHER YOU'RE GETTING ENOUGH SLEEP EVERY NIGHT? AND WHAT ARE THE RISKS IF YOU DON'T? DR ELLIE EXPLAINS ALL...

**H**ow much sleep you need really depends on the individual: it is usually around eight hours a night, but some of us need a bit more, and some thrive on a lot less. If you are waking up cranky and tired each day, you know you're not getting enough! And missing out on sleep can also be bad for your health...

## SLEEP EASY

We may not have the cure for the common cold or other viruses, but we know that rest and sleep can help you to recover. That is because sleep has a direct effect on your immune system: you need a good amount of sleep to be able to fight infections. If you're the one who seems to catch every cold and cough going, it may be through lack of sleep.

## PILING ON THE POUNDS

Insomnia can be bad news for your waistline. Research shows that people who don't get seven hours of sleep each night have a higher chance of being obese and tend to gain more weight than those getting seven hours or more. The amount of sleep seems to affect the levels of certain hormones within the body that control both hunger and feeling full. Given the health consequences of obesity, this is a big issue.



## HARMFUL TO YOUR HEART

Poor sleep increases the risk of heart disease and stroke. Prolonged insomnia is known to be associated with higher blood pressure and faster heart rate, which increases your risk of these diseases. Insomnia can also heighten your chances of developing diabetes: missing out on deep sleep seems to alter the way the body processes glucose.



## ADDING TO ANXIETY

Without a doubt, sleep is related to good mental health. We all know how awful it feels to have had one bad night's sleep: you feel irritable, low and often jittery the next day. It is easy to see that a chronic lack of sleep can lead to mental health problems, notably anxiety and depression. Anxiety and poor sleep become a vicious cycle, with each exacerbating the other.

## LOW LIBIDO

If you or your partner are less interested in sex than you think you should be, it may well be because of insomnia. Scientific studies show that poor-quality sleep in men and women is associated with a low libido and less interest in sex. Men who have the snoring and breathing condition called sleep apnoea that disturbs sleep can have a lower testosterone level: the male hormone which affects libido.



## NODDING OFF

To make sure you fall asleep easily at night, you need to adopt an approach known as 'sleep hygiene'. Essentially, this is about creating the perfect environment for good sleep: a dark, quiet room within a peaceful environment, and a good wind-down routine. You can do this with earplugs, blackout blinds or an eye mask, no phones or work near your bed, and have a relaxing bath beforehand.

## SORT IT OUT

If you have a chronic problem with sleep, it may be worth speaking to your GP. Often sleep is worsened by other issues such as chronic illness, pain or anxiety, and these can be treated to improve your nights. Sleep therapy can be an option, too, which is usually offered in groups. Nowadays, doctors try to avoid prescribing long-term sleeping tablets, as there is a danger of addiction.

# Look younger with Lesley



Anti-ageing guru **Lesley Reynolds** reveals the latest treatments to help you stay youthful

Judging by the amount of flesh on show at the Oscars, the cleavage is back in fashion. But you don't have to have perfect breasts to win your own best supporting role...

## THE ULTIMATE CHEST REJUVENATOR

Treat **clinkles (cleavage wrinkles), sunspots and crepey skin with Biomimetic Mesotherapy.** This technology stimulates the mesoderm (mid-dermis), or middle layer of skin, and works by placing a series of painless micro-injections around the cleavage area. Containing over

50 active ingredients, including peptides and vitamins to boost the collagen and elastin, soften fine lines and fade pigmentation, you'll see smoother skin within a week. A course of six weekly sessions produces the best results, and there is little downtime. Cost from £350 per treatment.

## RESTORE A GLOW

There's something to be said about the **Intense Pulsed Light (IPL) procedure.**

The 30-minute treatment is good for fading discolouration, zapping broken capillaries and restoring a glow, and includes 'firing' an intense light at the area to be treated. This releases energy into the skin which then stimulates regeneration of the cells, boosting collagen so skin becomes tighter and plumper. From £80 per treatment; results will last up to 18 months.



## PEEL AWAY THE YEARS

Peels can do much to **improve the quality of skin.** Glycolic peels are good for smoothing fine lines. After cleansing, the glycolic solution is prepared to suit your skin type, then brushed over the

cleavage area. It's left on for about 10 minutes, rinsed off, then followed by a moisturising lotion. A course of six peels, one a week, will produce best results. From £80 per peel; results should last up to a year.

## AND DON'T FORGET...

- A light glow on the cleavage area will help disguise creases and lines. You can fake it using a self-tanning moisturiser formulated for the face and décolletage, or mix a little illuminating powder or a dot of foundation into your neck moisturiser for light coverage.
- Start caring for your chest and neck as you would your face. Apply body moisturiser all the way up and over your bust, and face moisturiser all the way down to your chest.
- Look for creams packed with antioxidants, peptides and hyaluronic acid to protect, repair and hydrate. Vitamin C builds collagen (which plumps skin) and helps treat light pigmentation. Vitamin A (retinol) will help repair any sun damage.

For more information on Lesley and her team of doctors, please visit [harleystreetskinclinic.com](http://harleystreetskinclinic.com)