



# COPING UNDER QUARANTINE; SLEEPING PROBLEMS





## INTRODUCTION TO SLEEP



**Always feel tired**  
I never feel like I have had enough sleep  
**I wake up and can't fall back to sleep**  
**Restless through the night**  
**Toss and turn for hours**  
**I just lie there**  
**I sleep too much**  
**I drift in and out of sleep**

Recognise those statements? You might have some problems with your sleep.

A recent study has found as many as 30% of the adult population are affected by sleep problems, and they are particularly common in over 65

Therefore, having problems with your sleep at some point in your life is quite normal.



## UNDERSTANDING SLEEP AND SLEEPING PROBLEMS

If you focus on one crucial part of your daily routine, make sure it's your sleep.

It's so important that you get enough good quality sleep to protect your mental health, physical health and overall quality of life. However, if you start experiencing a chronic lack of sleep or poor quality sleep, the research indicates that this can increase the risks of developing disorders such as depression, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and high blood pressure.

Sleep is a complex, dynamic process with a biological purpose still unknown to us. However, scientists are starting to unravel its mystery and understand the effects it has on how we function.

Hopefully, this booklet will help you get to grips with your sleep problems and help you overcome them.

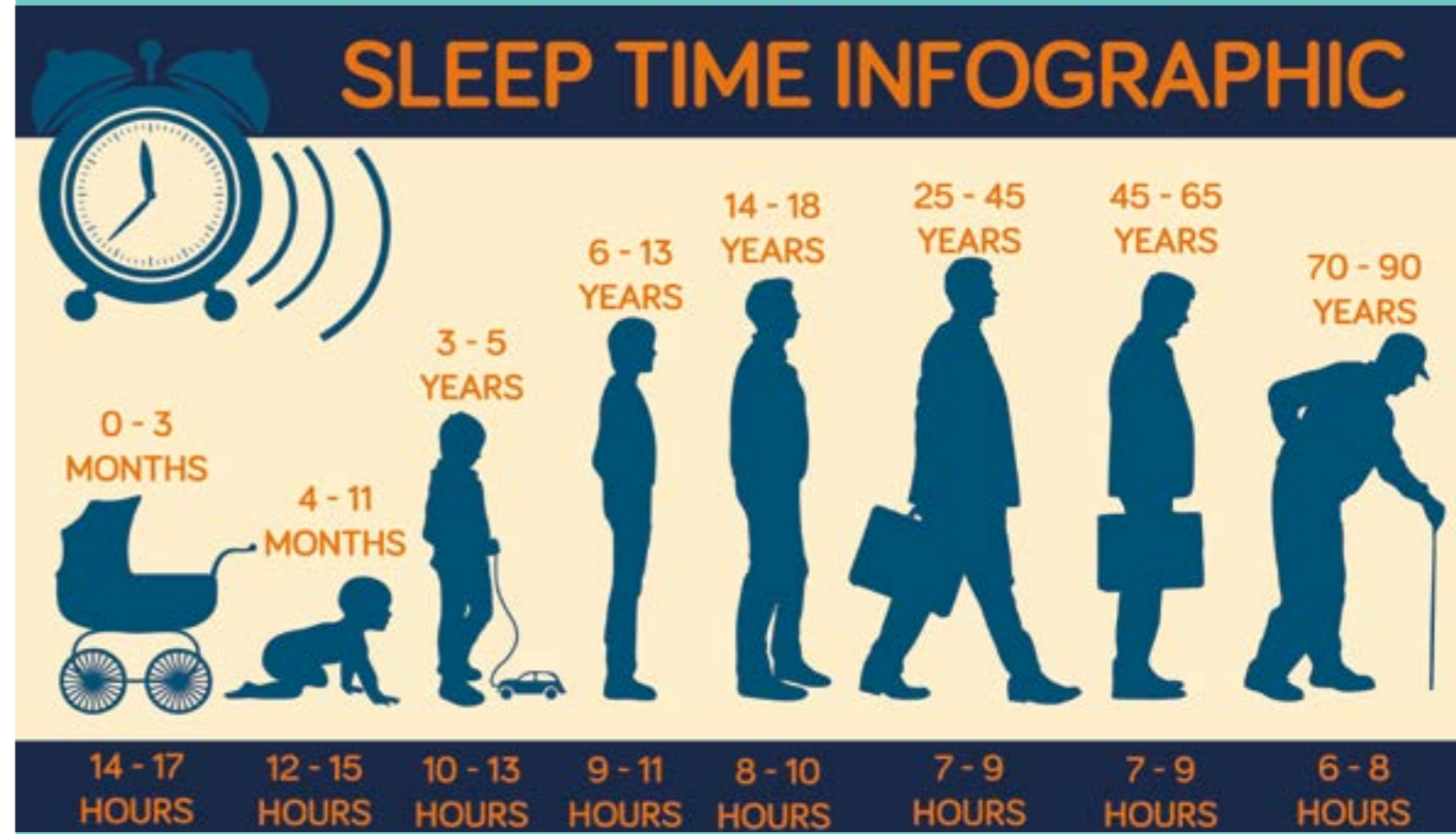




## HOW MUCH SLEEP DO WE NEED?

There is a popular idea that everyone needs 7-8 hours of sleep. However, this theory does not take into account one essential point, age. While it is true that adults need 7-9 hours of sleep, babies sleep on average, 14-17 hours a day as children grow older, this decreases to 11-14. Teenageers, 8-10 hours of sleep. As we age, the recommended amount of sleep decreases. The current research suggests over 65's may need less sleep, although at least 7-8 hours is still recommended.

There is also another factor that affects how much sleep you need - activity. Older, retired people are less active and require less time to rest. Whereas a young family - mainly the parents who are always on the go, will need more sleep.





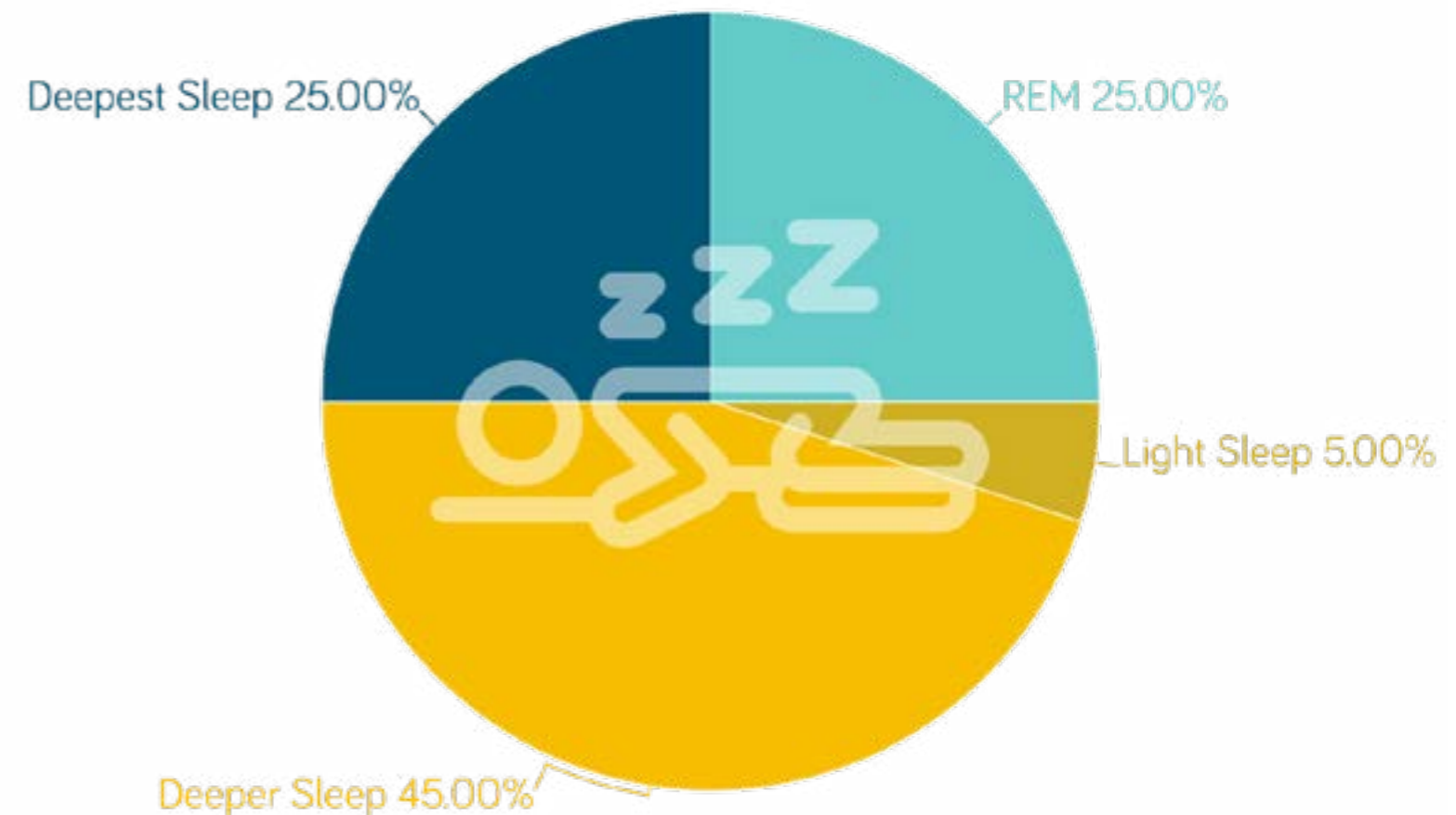
## DIFFERENT TYPES OF SLEEP

The best way to describe sleep is like a staircase rather than like a lightbulb switching on and off. There are at least four different types or stages of sleep that have been identified.

During your sleep cycle, you will have Rapid Eye Movement (REM) and non-REM sleep. REM sleep occurs several times throughout the night and is where most of your dreaming is said to happen, whereas non-REM sleep is divided into three stages in which you go a bit deeper.

We go up and down this staircase many times during a night's sleep, as well as almost waking up several times. A typical good night's sleep for an adult will involve 25% in REM, 5% in stage 1 – light sleep, 45% in stage 2 – deeper sleep, and 25% in stage 3 – deepest sleep.

## TYPES OF SLEEP



Similar to the amount of sleep we need, the type of sleep we need changes as we get older. Sleep in people over 65 tends to be lighter and more broken, with more frequent waking.

As well as becoming lighter and more broken as we get older, the pattern of when we sleep can change too. It starts to be more likely that we will go to bed sooner, wake up earlier or fall asleep during the day, so the natural rhythm of sleep can be disturbed as a result of this.



## CHANGES IN SLEEP PATTERNS

The types of sleep listed above form a sleep pattern.

- Stage 1 - Light sleep
- Stage 2 - Deeper sleep
- Stage 3 - Deepest sleep
- Stage 4 - REM sleep or Rapid Eye Movement sleep.

During the night, we travel up and down the stages many times and almost wake up several times.

We know that the amount of sleep we need changes with age, but the type of sleep we need changes also. For a typical person aged over 70 deep sleep forms decreases to about 10% of total sleep time.

## OTHER CHANGES IN SLEEP PATTERNS

As we get older, our sleep becomes lighter and more broken as we are disturbed more easily. But we also change when we go to bed. As we age, we find people tend to go to bed earlier and wake up earlier too, or may have a nap during the afternoon.

These factors can also contribute to disturbing our natural rhythm of sleep

# WHAT CAUSES SLEEP PROBLEMS

**Surroundings:** The surroundings we are in can make a huge impact on how we sleep. If you are in an environment that is too hot or too cold, your bed is too hard or too soft, you are surrounded by noise or too much light, you may find that your sleep is a lot more disturbed. Sleeping in a place you aren't used to can also impact sleep.

**Effects of ageing:** When we get older we tend to sleep less deeply and can also sleep less well at night. This can result in nodding off during the day which again reduces the need for sleep at night. This isn't the problem, however repeatedly not getting a good night's sleep can become a cause for frustration, worry and concern which can lead to sleeping less as well.

**Disrupted sleep routine:** There are various things that will disrupt a sleep routine, such as working shifts that change frequently. This can get worse as we age and is also affected by certain lifestyle factors such as smoking and consuming alcohol.

**Bereavement:** Bereavement or other trauma that comes with emotional upset can affect sleep, and nightmares and upsetting memories are factors that don't help.

**Medical reasons for disrupted sleep:** There are many health related issues such as depression, menopause, pain and restless leg syndrome that can relate to poor sleep that may or may not coincide with getting older. Although this booklet may help, if you are worried or concerned about your sleep you should talk to your GP.

**Stress, worry and anxiety:** When we find ourselves anxious or stressed, we may find it difficult to fall asleep due to overactive minds and tense bodies.





## WHAT SLEEP PROBLEMS YOU MAY HAVE

### **Getting to sleep**

Easily the most common problem people have. For some it can take hours to fall off to sleep, however once they are asleep the quality is generally good.

### **Staying asleep**

The second most common sleeping problem. This is a disturbance in the sleeping pattern which will have you waking up in the middle of the night, struggling to fall back to sleep

### **Poor quality sleep**

Sleeping lightly, easily disturbed, always restless and difficulty falling back to sleep.

### **Waking too early**

Waking up earlier than wanted, and not being able to fall back to sleep.

### **Sleeping too much**

People find themselves always feeling tired, and over sleeping. This is another very common issue people report having.

You may find you have a mixture of these or only one.





## MANAGING SLEEP PROBLEMS

Sleeping problems vary from person to person, depending on a variety of reasons

- Age
- Medical reasons
- Gender
- Emotional reasons

There are numerous sleep problems, you may find you have one or a number of them.

## OVERCOMING YOUR SLEEP PROBLEMS

Try look for any other reasons as to why you may not be sleeping soundly. It could be stress at work, financial worries, even worrying about not getting sleep, can effect your sleep.

Try think of a **PROBLEM**, now can you come up with a **SOLUTION**

**PROBLEM:** Worrying about not getting enough sleep before bed

**SOLUTION:** Try to clear the mind before bed time, you know you're going to fall asleep. Try meditation or breathing techniques that can be found in our **ANXIETY & STRESS** booklets

**PROBLEM:** Anxiety, depression and stress

**SOLUTION:** Use relaxation techniques found in the **ANXIETY & STRESS** booklets to help calm your self down and not letting your mind race.

**PROBLEM:** Getting up to go to the toilet several times a night

**SOLUTION:** There could be a medical reason for this. However, some bladder retraining can help with this, so can restricting caffeine intake and not drinking so much an hour or two before bed.



**Don't Worry:**

If you're having problems with sleep, try not to worry. It might be the case that you are getting enough sleep, just less than you expect. The amount of sleep we get changes from person to person.

**Electronic Devices:**

Avoid using electronic devices such as your phone before bedtime. The blue light that is emitted stimulates the brain and hinders melatonin production which is the hormone we need to sleep.

**Alcohol:**

Even though people often feel sleepy after drinking a lot of alcohol, the quality of sleep is still affected. Avoid drinking large amounts of alcohol close to bedtime if you are having sleeping difficulties.

## DEVELOP GOOD SLEEP HABITS

When a sleep problem starts, it is helpful to try and eliminate any bad sleep habits you may have. The diagram shows a few good sleep habits you can try and utilise.

The methods mentioned to the right can really help to improve your sleep.

If you follow this booklet but still feel as though you are having sleep problems, please contact a doctor.



**Consistency:**

A consistent timetable can really help your body know when to sleep and wake up, especially during a time when we are isolated and stuck in one place all day every day.

**Activity:**

Having increased activity levels will make you more likely to have a good night's sleep, so be mindful of doing this but just don't exercise too near to bedtime.

**Cigarettes:**

Nicotine is a stimulant therefore smoking last thing at night can keep you awake. Try and have your last cigarette 4 hours before bedtime.



We hope this resource has helped you, if you need any further resources around mental and physical wellbeing, please visit our

### [Business continuity and keeping your employees engaged through Covid-19](#)

page on our website, you will find everything we offer our clients employee's there, for free during this time. We hope you get some comfort and value from these.

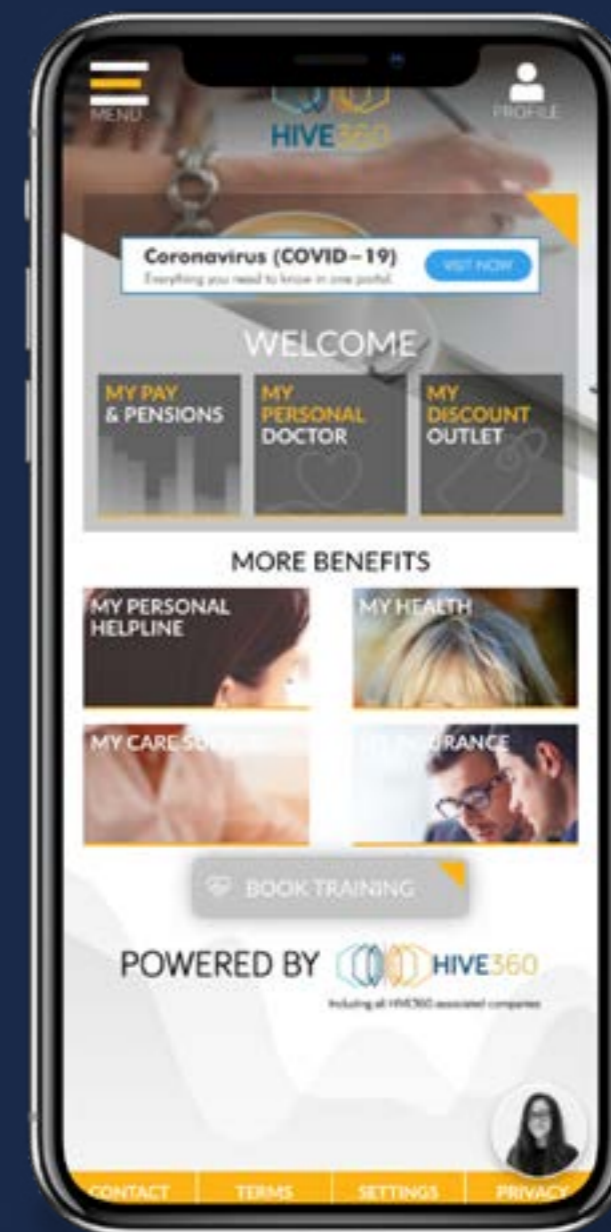
Stay safe, stay healthy, stay at home.

## WHO ARE HIVE360?

Hive360 empowers businesses of all sizes to achieve better engagement with their people.

We believe that everyone deserves the best work-life experience and that great communication, wellbeing support and financial benefits are the cornerstones of this.

Our game-changing engagement platform delivers better communication, vital healthcare support and attractive lifestyle benefits in the palm of your hand.





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