the Sleep Charity

ADVICE SHEET

Sleep and exams: A survival guide

Exam time can feel super stressful, and the way you handle that stress can make a big difference to how well you do.

Everyone gets nervous about tests, but things like staying up too late, drinking loads of energy drinks or coffee and snacking on junk food can actually make exams harder. When you don't get enough sleep, your brain can feel foggy. That means it's easier to forget things, make mistakes or feel confused during the exam. Taking care of yourself isn't just "nice to do" - it can really help you perform better.

Here are The Sleep Charity's tips to surviving the exam season:

Be prepared

The best way to feel less stressed is to get **organised**.
Make a simple revision timetable so you know what you're studying and when. Try your best to **stick to it!**

Prioritise your work

Revision can feel like a lot. Break it into smaller chunks and start with the most important stuff. **Small goals** make it feel way more **manageable**.

Take a break from screens

It's fine to chat with friends, but give yourself a **digital break** every evening. Switch off your devices at least an hour before bed so your brain can actually relax.

Try a quick relaxation technique

Deep breathing can **calm your mind** fast. Sit quietly, close your eyes and breathe in and out slowly. It's easy and you can do it anywhere.

Change your scenery

If studying is getting boring or stressful, move somewhere else for a bit. Go outside, get some fresh air or tidy your room to make it feel nicer. Even **small changes can help**.

Get moving

Exercise is great for blowing off stress. Go for a walk, a run,or play a sport you enjoy. Moving your body helps you sleep better and **gives your brain a break**.

Eat well

Stress eating is real, but it can make you feel worse. Keep some healthy snacks like fruit or nuts nearby, and **try not to rely on sugary snacks or loads of caffeine**.

Be kind to yourself

Talk to yourself the way you'd talk to a friend. Try to stay positive, set realistic goals and **focus on what you can do right now**.

Socialise (a little)

Hanging out with friends can help you feel less alone. Sometimes just talking to someone who gets it can make you feel better. And if you're really stressed, **tell someone you trust**.

Sleep well

Most young people need around 8 hours of sleep every night.
All-nighters might seem like a good idea, but they actually make you more stressed and forgetful. Study a bit each day and **get a proper rest** before the exam. A comfy bed really helps you sleep better too.

the national sleep helpline **03303 530 541**

For more information visit
thesleepcharity.org.uk