

SLEEP

AN ATHLETE'S BEST FRIEND.



IN COLLABORATION WITH



“One thing that I learned early on in my professional career is that the best recovery - no matter how much ice, cold tanks, massage you have, it can never substitute for good sleep. That is the greatest form of recovery for athletes like myself and for athletes all over the world. The greatest recovery is actual sleep. And for me, I take sleep very seriously.”

– LEBRON JAMES

HOW MUCH DO YOU REALLY KNOW ABOUT SLEEP?

YOU MIGHT GET ENOUGH SLEEP FOR AN EVERYDAY YOUNG PERSON, BUT AS AN ATHLETE YOU MAY NOT BE REACHING YOUR FULL POTENTIAL.

Sleep has a direct impact on your energy levels, appetite, weight control, immune function and mood, as well as cognitive and physical performance.

WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT TO KNOW ABOUT SLEEP?

SLEEP IS THE SINGLE GREATEST NATURAL PERFORMANCE ENHANCER AVAILABLE TO ATHLETES. AND IT'S FREE! THERE ARE THREE IMPORTANT FACTORS TO CONSIDER WITH SLEEP:

1) THE NUMBER OF HOURS YOU GET

The amount of sleep we need changes over the course of your life, as does the timing of when our bodies want to sleep. As an adolescent athlete you are in a category of requiring at least **8-10 hours** of sleep each night.

HOW MUCH SLEEP DO THE ELITE GET?



USAIN BOLT
8-10 HRS



ROGER FEDERER
11-12 HRS



LEBRON JAMES
12+ HRS

DID YOU KNOW?

Adolescent athletes (12-18yrs) that sleep less than 8 hours on average are **70% more likely to get injured** than those who sleep more than 8 hours. (Milewski et al. 2014)

2) THE QUALITY OF THOSE SLEEP HOURS

Lying in bed awake does not count towards sleep hours. If you spend lots of hours in bed but not sleeping, you are not sleeping efficiently. Your bed should only be used for sleep. Try to avoid working, eating, or watching lots of TV in bed as this will likely impact how efficiently you are using your sleep hours.

3) THE TIMING OF YOUR SLEEP

Are you a morning lark or a night owl? People prefer different sleep times and patterns, and these can change throughout our lifetime. The key is to keep things consistent - try to go to bed and wake up at the same time as much as you can.

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SHOULD I TAKE A NAP?

NAPPING CAN BE VERY BENEFICIAL, WHEN USED STRATEGICALLY (Waterhouse et al. 2017).

Key napping tips:

- 1) Do not nap too close to bedtime
- keep before 3pm where possible
- 2) Use 30minute power naps instead of long ones. This means you are less likely to go into your deep sleep and wake up feeling groggy. It also limits the possibility that it will impact you getting to sleep later that night

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TIP: Try a 5-10minute power nap in the car park before training - this could help you to sharpen your focus for the session.

HOW DOES TECHNOLOGY IMPACT OUR SLEEP?

BLUE LIGHT IS THE TYPE OF LIGHT EMITTED FROM OUR PHONES, TVS, LAPTOPS AND TABLETS. BY USING THESE AT NIGHT, WE TELL OUR BRAIN THAT IT IS DAYTIME AND WE SHOULD BE AWAKE.

Things you can do to reduce light from screens:

- 1) Turn night mode on your phone - set to come on at least 2-3hrs before your usual bedtime. Use 'most warm' setting.
- 2) Download f.lux on your computer (<https://justgetflux.com/>). This changes the colour of the screen to make it more orange.
- 3) Try to minimise gaming or social media late at night - these activities can stimulate the brain and result in not being able to 'switch off' as quickly as we may like.

HOW CAN YOU IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES OF A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP?



Keep bedroom cool - best around 18-19 degrees for males and 19-20 degrees for females



Minimise noise - keep pets out of the bed, use ear plugs if external noise is a problem



Avoid big meals and lots of liquid late at night



Don't drink caffeine in the afternoon



Try to keep screen time to a minimum - leave them outside your room



If you get up in the night, do not turn the lights on (keep as dim as possible)



Maximise light in the mornings - it will help you feel more alert



Keep a regular schedule (make sleep part of your training schedule)

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Be open about any sleeping issues you may be having. Discuss this with your well-being officer and seek external support if needed. If you are concerned about any clinical sleep issues contact your GP.

Contact **Dr Elise Facer-Childs from Peak Sleep to Elite** who offers sleep support services and individual sleep coaching:

elise@peaksleeptoeelite.com

peaksleeptoeelite.com

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