



## Sleep for high performance

### About sleep

Sleep is a naturally-occurring state of altered consciousness, with reduced activity of almost all voluntary muscles, reduced sensory awareness, and very little interaction with your surroundings, although your brain is active.

Sleep is essential to survival. Sleep assists psychological recovery, restoring mood, motivation, ability to learn, and ability to recall and consolidate memories. Sleep also enables physiological recovery - repairing and strengthening muscle; maintaining bone health; reducing inflammation; metabolising fats and glucose; and supporting your cardiovascular, neuroendocrine and immune systems.

### Sleep and the performing artist

Although 7-9 hours of sleep each night supports general health and daily activity, many performing artists benefit from 10 hours each night when coping with the physical, emotional and cognitive demands of training, rehearsals or performances. Extended sleep can lead to better mood, better performance and better recovery from psychological and physical injury.

If your sleep has been disturbed or insufficient, a 30-minute daytime nap can assist your alertness and performance. Allow as much time as possible (ideally 8 hours) between waking from your nap and going to bed for the night to ensure you are ready to sleep again.

On tour, ensuring sufficient, regular sleep can seem impossible within constantly changing rehearsal and performance schedules; long-distance travel and jet-lag; unfamiliar environments and climates; and extra training time to maintain performance levels. Planning your sleep hours as each day's schedule is posted can help you keep rested and ready to perform.

### Sleep disturbances

Difficulty in falling asleep and/or numerous waking periods can lead to negative health and performance outcomes. If the situation persists, ask your doctor to check for contributing health problems.

### Insomnia

Insomnia is defined as persistent difficulty in falling or staying asleep, or nonrestorative sleep, leading to distress and/or significant impairments in daytime function. A chronic lack of sleep has negative impacts on health, well-being and performance, so sufferers are strongly advised to ask a doctor whether health problems such as sleep apnoea, depression or anxiety may be contributing.

### Solutions for sleep disturbances and insomnia

**Cognitive Behaviour Therapy** (CBTI, CBTi, CBT-I or CBT-I) is the most effective treatment for sleep disturbances and insomnia – as effective as medication in the short term but more beneficial effects in the longer term. CBTI sessions can be given in person or online.

### Sleep hygiene and other helpful hints

- Schedule the sleep you need
- Maintain consistent sleep and waking times
- Relax before going to bed
- Keep the room temperature around 19-21°C
- Make your bed comfortable and avoid overheating
- Keep the environment dark and quiet.

**Jetlag:** Spend time in daylight to reset your body clock

**Napping:** Avoid napping for 8 hours before bed time

**Stimulants:** Avoid caffeine, nicotine, alcohol before bed

**Light:** Set TV and devices so they switch to a blue light filter each evening. If your device does not have an option such as “Night Mode” or “Night Light”, free apps are available online

**TV, phones, games:** Turn off 30 minutes before bed

**Mental readiness:** Avoid thought-provoking conversations and exciting novels before bed.

### Medication

Research shows that prescribed medication may offer short term help. Long-term medication is not effective and can lead to other problems.

**NB: This poster is for educational purposes only and does not replace the advice of a health professional.**