Struggling to sleep? Here's how to get a better night's rest (and improve your health)

It's no secret, less quality sleep equals poor healthy choices the next day. When we're tired, our willpower to maintain healthy habits disappears.

Think about it, when you've had a bad night's sleep, you're more likely to indulge in heavily-processed or high-fat foods, skip meals in favour of an extra cup of coffee, pass on exercising, or sit and scroll devices instead of taking regular breaks.

Quality sleep is crucial for maintaining good health. And it's not just a case of trying to get to bed earlier or reading before we turn in for the night – it's about what we do during the day that matters, too. Our daily habits directly impact how long or how well we sleep.

3 Ways to improve the quality of your sleep

1) Move your body to calm your mind

When we exercise, we increase a chemical in our brain called serotonin – a hormone that helps stabilise our mood, feelings of well-being, and happiness. Exercising releases feel-good endorphins which can help us better cope with stress and improve our mental health.

2) Be mindful of what you watch before bed

As tempting as it is to binge-watch the latest action-packed Netflix series over dinner, this could be hindering your ability to sleep. Your body's ready for rest, but your brain is still running through that last episode – what's going to happen next? Will character x make it? Cliffhanger episodes – found in most action series today – are designed to keep us hooked (and our brains running).

3) Make 'me time' part of your workday

Instead of trying to cram in self-care time right before bed – possibly feeling rushed or low on energy, why not make it part of your daily routine? Grabbing a quick walk around the block or standing outside for a few minutes between meetings or tasks, isn't only good for your well-being, it's also a great way to squeeze in some mini 'me time' blocks. This will help you resist the urge to stay up later (also known as revenge bedtime procrastination) just to get in some 'me time.'

Sleep time is sacred time. What can you do during the day to help your body relax and prepare for a good night's rest?