

## Description

## Getting a Good Night's Sleep

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### Follow a basic healthy lifestyle

Preparing for a good night's sleep during pregnancy begins long before your relaxing bedtime routine. Making sure you are following a basic healthy lifestyle is key to ensuring a restful night's sleep:

- Fresh air, exercise; avoid over exertion and exhaustion
- Drink plenty of water
- Eat fresh fruit and vegetables
- Avoid foods that might cause bloating or are difficult to digest
- Good digestion, regular bowel movements
- No pressure on the stomach area
- Warm, supportive underwear and clothing.

### Bedtime routine

Having a calming bedtime routine is really beneficial in setting the tone for a peaceful night's sleep and incorporating any of these ideas below may help you to unwind and melt away the stresses of the day.

- Sleep at regular times. This will help your internal body clock to get used to a set routine.
- A warm relaxing bath will help your body reach a temperature that is ideal for rest and warm your muscles and ligaments to soothe any aches.
- Lavender essential oil can be used to help calm and soothe the mind.[1]
- Drink a soothing and calming herbal tea such as camomile or peppermint.
- Writing a to do list for the next day can help to clear your mind of any distractions and organise your thoughts for the following day.
- Use supportive bedding and pillows that are cleaned regularly.
- Do relaxation exercises such as breathing techniques or light yoga stretches, to help relax your muscles.
- Listening to relaxation audios, which use carefully selected words, sounds and music to calm your mind.
- Avoid screen time and using your phone, tablets or electronic devices for at least an hour before bedtime, as the light omitted may have a negative effect on sleep.[2]

**Safe sleeping during pregnancy**

Research has shown that in the third trimester (after 28 weeks of pregnancy), going to sleep on your back increases your risk of stillbirth. As the link has now been shown in four separate research trials, the current advice is to go to sleep on your side in the third trimester because it is safer for your baby. The advice relates to any episode of sleep, including:

- going to sleep at night
- returning to sleep after any night awakenings
- daytime naps.

If your pregnancy is uncomplicated, your risk of stillbirth is generally low (1 in 200 babies are stillborn). Going to sleep on your side will make it even lower.[3,4]

**Conclusion**

Getting a good night's sleep is important during pregnancy, as it will help you to feel refreshed and energised for the day ahead. Being pregnant is naturally tiring, so it is beneficial for your overall wellbeing to invest time and effort into your daily nutrition, exercise and relaxation routines so that you can fully enjoy a well-deserved, good night's sleep. **TPM**

**Lavender: a relaxation wonder that soothes body and soul ready for sleep**

The silvery-leaved shrub has been valued since ancient times as a bathing and washing additive, with a relaxing and calming effect. The name lavender probably comes from the Latin verb lavare, which means 'to wash'. In aromatherapy, the characteristic lavender note has also proven a true classic. Its deep blue-violet colour fascinates the eye and its essential oil calms the central nervous system. In fact, lavender has a relaxing effect on the whole body – the components of lavender oil help against nervous agitation, insomnia, cramps and indigestion. The regulatory effect of this ancient medicinal plant brings body and soul back into balance after a hectic day. People who find it hard to switch off at night can bathe or shower with lavender, or massage with Lavender Relaxing Body Oil, and relax ready for a good's night sleep.

**References**

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3. Heazell A, Li M, Budd J, Thompson J et al. Association between maternal sleep practices and late stillbirth – findings from a stillbirth case-control study. BJOG. 2018;125(2):254-262.
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