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## 6 TIPS TO MAXIMISING YOUR SLEEP

27 February 2014 By Claudia Canavan

Want to be more productive, creative and make better decisions? Follow our expert advice on maximising the time you spend sleeping

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The less hours sleep we have, the more committed, ambitious and dynamic we are at work.

At least, that was the twisted logic of the so-called alpha male for a while.

In this new dawn of Fuelbands, green juices and choosing [overall wellbeing](#) over an extra three shots of espresso, the mythical four hours snatched by the likes of Churchill don't seem to be indicators of superhuman greatness anymore.

[A new study published this month](#) has shown a clear link between less than eight hours and a doubled risk of depression, [while another has proven that the daily rhythms of our genes are disrupted when our sleep patterns shift.](#)

All this obviously has implications for our productivity and energy levels.

Peter Hames, co-founder of [sleep facility Sleepio](#) and a former insomniac, says: "Sleep affects every part of our lives, from productivity at work to relationships to long-term health. It might mean making bad decisions on the job, as opposed to a good night, which increases creativity."

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Pretty important then.

With this in mind, we asked the brilliantly titled '[Sleep Guru](#)' how you can maximise the time you spend in bed for better productivity and clarity in your working day.

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#### 1 | Hum

It sounds a bit off, but we've had a crack, and it does work.

Spend 10 minutes before you go to sleep humming like a bee.

This relaxes the mind, the nervous system and produces serotonin – making dropping off a whole lot quicker.

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#### 2 | Get outside in the morning

12 hours in front of a screen isn't uncommon for a lot of men. If you can get outside for a [20 minute jog in the morning](#), you'll regulate your production of c which is essential for sleeping well.

#### 3 | Watch funny telly

Time spent watching *Curb You Enthusiasm* re-runs in the early evening is not time wasted. Laughter helps you relax into a deep state of sleep, as well as strengthening your immune system and boosting your energy.

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#### 4 | Eat early

When it comes to sleep, when is as important as what you eat.

Too late, and your body will be digesting instead of getting into resting mode. And lay off the booze – it'll make you fall asleep quicker, but the actual quality will be seriously forfeited.

#### 5 | Massage your jaw

People with trouble sleeping often grind their teeth. This makes the masseter muscle extremely tight, and creates stress in the body.

To counter-act this, find the corner of your jaw bone with your middle finger and move the fingers in small circular motions as deeply as possible.

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After 30 seconds open the mouth as far as possible and then relax, then see if you feel a sensation of lightness.

Try this five times a day if you're a chronic bad sleeper.

#### 6 | Keep cool

Make a special effort to keep your room as cool as you can.

A slightly chilly room contributes to good sleep, because it mimics what occurs inside the body when the body's internal temperature drops during the night to its lowest level.

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#### 7| Shut down your screens

Working on your laptop or sitting in front of [FIFA](#) before bed time is guaranteed to mess with your sleep.

The light shining in your face tells your body that it's not time to start converting serotonin to melatonin – this process is triggered by the dark.

[thesleepguru.co.uk](http://thesleepguru.co.uk)