HOW INSOMNIA AFFECTS YOU

A lack of sleep doesn't just make you feel tired, it affects your entire body

1 INCREASED ANXIETY
Just one sleepless night can increase anxiety levels by 30 per cent.

2 LOWER PAIN THRESHOLD
Sleep deprivation increases activity in the pain-sensing regions of the brain, raising pain sensitivity.

3 BRAIN FOG
Sleep loss disrupts communication between brain cells, leading to a shorter attention span, impaired judgement and memory issues.

4 EYE IRRITATION
The telltale sign of sleep deprivation is dark circles under the eyes, but a lack of sleep can also affect your eyes in other ways. Sleep loss can make eyes dry, itchy and bloodshot, while eyelids may twitch. Vision can also become blurred and hyper-sensitive to light.



5 WEAKENED IMMUNE SYSTEM
Not getting enough sleep reduces the production of antibodies, increasing vulnerability to infections.

6 HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE
A healthy heart relies on sleep to dip blood pressure levels, so blood pressure increases without sleep.

7 GUT ISSUES
A lack of sleep can lead to gut problems such as bloating and inflammation. Meanwhile, insomnia decreases impulse control and levels of appetite-suppressing leptin, leading to cravings for junk food that's detrimental to gut health. Sleep loss also increases appetite-boosting ghrelin, leading to higher calorie intake and weight gain.



8 POOR HEART HEALTH
Insomnia is linked to heart disease, while sleep apnea increases the risk of heart attacks.

9 BONE LOSS AND OSTEOPOROSIS
Sleep restriction is recognised as a risk factor for bone fractures, bone loss and osteoporosis.

11 TYPE 2 DIABETES
Sleep apnea is a risk factor for type 2 diabetes, as it leads to insulin resistance and impaired glucose metabolism.

Did you know?
Back sleepers tend to have the most nightmares

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10 LOW LIBIDO
Sleep deprivation is linked to reduced levels of arousal and desire.

FOUR

The number of mattresses the average person will buy

SLEEPING ON YOUR LEFT SIDE CAN EASE HEARTBURN AND INDIGESTION

TWO HOURS

On average, you dream for around a quarter of your sleep



Domestic cats need around 12 to 18 hours of sleep per day

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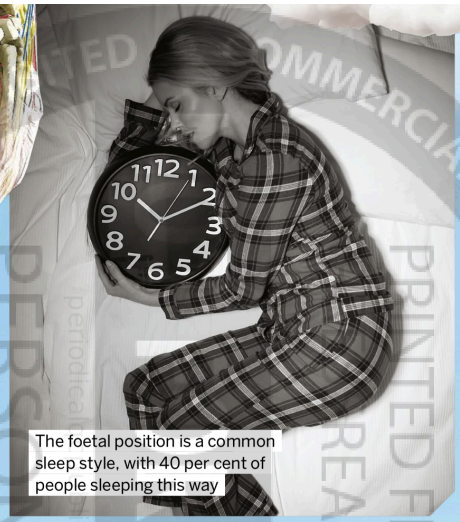

The foetal position is a common sleep style, with 40 per cent of people sleeping this way

DID YOU KNOW? Named after night owl Margaret Thatcher, the Thatcher gene allows some people to function on little sleep

THREE

An average adult wakes up several times throughout the night

ELEPHANTS SLEEP FOR TWO HOURS A DAY IN THE WILD

FIVE MINUTES

The minimum time it should take to fall asleep

7%

Less than one in ten adults sleep on their stomachs

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SPECIAL

MAKING THE BED

Hybrid mattresses have recently skyrocketed in popularity. Here's a breakdown of what their designs offer

Did you know?
The spring mattress was invented in 1865



1 PILLOW TOP
Pillow tops with cooling hypoallergenic covers provide a soft, refreshing sleep surface.

2 COMFORT LAYER
A memory foam or latex layer adds body-cradling comfort. As memory foam traps heat, it's usually infused with heat-dissipating gel.

3 TRANSITION LAYER
A transition layer of foam builds a bridge between the cushioning comfort layer and the supportive coils.

4 INDIVIDUALLY WRAPPED SPRINGS
Springs or coils provide zoned support and increase airflow to encourage optimal spine alignment and prevent overheating.

5 BASE LAYER
The coils are reinforced by high-density foam to boost the mattress' life span.

6 BOTTOM COVER
Bottom covers typically have handles for easy moving and an anti-slip base to prevent restless sleepers from shifting the mattress.

SMART BEDS

Using sensors, smart beds are designed to track your sleep without requiring you to wear a device. In addition to in-depth health and sleep tracking, smart beds also adapt to fit your movement, comfort and sleep schedule. For instance, the Sleep.8 iSense Hybrid Premier Smart Mattress monitors your movements and adjusts its firmness accordingly. Meanwhile, some smart beds even help you wake up with in-built silent alarms. The Eight Sleep Pod 4, a smart cover that can digitalise any basic mattress, vibrates and slowly cools your bed to gradually wake you up. The Pod 4 can also cool down or heat up with the help of ambient sensors that measure room temperature.



DID YOU KNOW? The Romans used cloth stuffed with hay and wool as mattresses. The wealthy also used feathers as filling

SUNRISE ALARMS

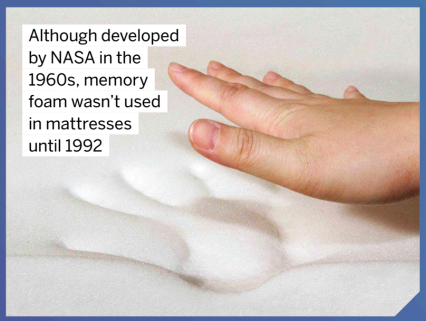
Alarms have come a long way since wind-up analogue clocks, and sunrise alarms prove this. Instead of annoying sounds that startle you awake and leave you feeling groggy, a sunrise alarm mimics the rising Sun by using natural-light simulation to gradually wake you up. Some sunrise alarms, such as the Phillips SmartSleep light, also have wind-down functions that mimic sunsets to help you relax before bed. Other benefits include easing symptoms associated with seasonal affective disorder – a depression that typically occurs during periods of restricted sunlight – FM radio functions and a range of alarm sounds. The Lumie Bodyclock Shine 300, for instance, includes birdsong and purring kittens as wake-up calls.



© Phillips

Sunrise alarms use brightness to signal to your brain that its time to wake up

"Maybe sleep is a way to keep you out of trouble during a time you're not meant to be awake"



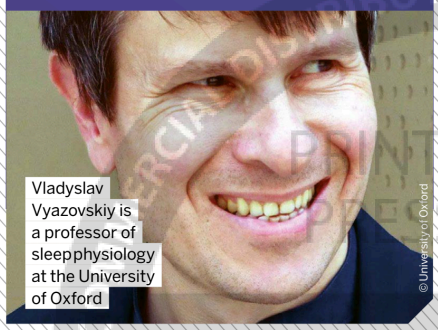
Although developed by NASA in the 1960s, memory foam wasn't used in mattresses until 1992

SLEEPY SUBJECT

Vladyslav Vyazovskiy reveals what animals can tell us about sleep and what trackers can't

What advice would you give to someone who wants to start using sleep-tracking devices at home?
It's great to have those, but it's about what you want to use those devices for. If you're using them as you're fixated on having the perfect restorative sleep, the simple truth is we do not know what makes sleep restorative as sleep is such a complex phenomenon. Until we have this knowledge, any desire to have perfect sleep is meaningless. Each of us sleep in our own unique way, which is not only determined by who we are and our lifestyle, but our conditions. There will be individuals who need longer sleep and individuals who need shorter sleep duration. There is no generic advice that works for everyone.

You've studied sleep in both humans and animals. What can studying the sleep patterns of animals teach us about our own sleep?
Maybe sleep is just a way to keep you out of trouble during a time you're not meant to be awake. It's uncommon for humans or animals to just collapse and fall asleep. Normally, there's preparatory behaviour that precedes sleep, like animals building a nest or hiding in burrows. Those make sure they sleep in a safe place, so my colleagues have proposed this idea that sleep is not for benefiting your memory or something, but just to keep you safe. When it gets dark, it's a powerful signal for changing your behaviour because we are not nocturnal creatures. We cannot see well in the darkness, and this can be dangerous. It makes a lot of sense that, as the day goes by and night is approaching, you need to also start preparing for your sleep routine.



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Vladyslav Vyazovskiy is a professor of sleep physiology at the University of Oxford

5 FACTS DREAMING ON

1 SHADES OF SHUT-EYE
While 12 per cent of people today have dreams that are entirely in black and white, it was 85 per cent before the introduction of colour television.

2 RETAIL THERAPY
The worst industry to work in if you want a good night's sleep is retail, with only 32 per cent of professionals in this field rating their sleep quality as good.

3 A NIGHT TO REMEMBER
We typically forget around 90 per cent of our dreams within ten minutes of waking up, but you're more likely to remember your dreams if you oversleep.

4 PRESIDENTIAL SUITE
Many US presidents have been nappers: John F. Kennedy took post-lunch naps, Lyndon B. Johnson enjoyed two-hour siestas and Calvin Coolidge's naps were part of an 11-hour sleep schedule.

5 SCHEDULING SLEEP
People who write a to-do list of tasks to complete the next day before going to bed fall asleep faster than those who write about the day they've just had.

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