

Insomnia Coping Toolkit

This toolkit provides quick strategies for managing insomnia symptoms, combining practical steps, relaxation methods, and helpful cognitive tools.

1. Evening Wind-Down Routine

- Switch off bright screens 60–90 minutes before bed.
- Dim lights and reduce stimulating activities.
- Use calming activities: gentle stretches, reading, or warm shower.

2. Relaxation Tools

- 4–6 breathing: inhale for 4, exhale for 6 to calm the nervous system.
- Progressive muscle relaxation: tense and release each muscle group.
- Body scan meditation: notice sensations head-to-toe without judgement.

3. Managing Sleep Thoughts

- Keep a notepad by the bed to write down worries before sleep.
- Use reframes: “I’ll cope tomorrow even if I sleep less.”
- Challenge perfectionism: aim for ‘good enough rest’ not perfect sleep.

4. If You Can’t Sleep

- Get up after 20 minutes if restless; go to a quiet, dim space.
- Do a calm activity (reading, light stretching) until drowsy.
- Return to bed when you feel sleepiness returning.

5. Lifestyle Supports

- Exercise in the morning or afternoon; avoid late vigorous activity.
- Reduce caffeine after lunchtime; avoid alcohol close to bed.
- Keep consistent wake-up times, even after poor nights.

Remember: Insomnia is common and treatable. If difficulties persist for weeks or impact your daily life, speak to your GP about referral to Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I).