



HÄLSA
wellbeing

Developing Good Sleep Hygiene & Encouraging Restorative Sleep With Long Covid

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ReviveYOU
Keeping you **well** after
Long Covid

Session Overview



How to take charge of your sleep!!

Give yourself a moment in time to support your wellbeing

During this session we will look at:

- ✓ *Why your sleep can be affected by Long Covid*
- ✓ *What is the impact?*
- ✓ *Understand what your 90 min Circadian Rhythm is and how to use it to your advantage*
- ✓ *Explore some key areas where you can make change*
- ✓ *What to do if you are struggling*

Inability to go to sleep

Waking in the night

Waking early

Why is my sleep disturbed?

- ✓ Persistent symptoms of Covid 19
- ✓ Medication side affects
- ✓ Reduction in access to natural light
- ✓ Pain
- ✓ Itchy skin
- ✓ Difficulty breathing
- ✓ Difficulty relaxing
- ✓ Reduction or no exercise
- ✓ Blood sugar regulation
- ✓ Tinnitus
- ✓ General disruption to sleep routine
- ✓ Adrenal glands working hard
- ✓ Digestion issues
- ✓ Stress/Anxiety



How much sleep do we need?

- ✓ 19-45 = 7 hours
- ✓ 46 + Years = 5-7 hours



Without Sleep we can become

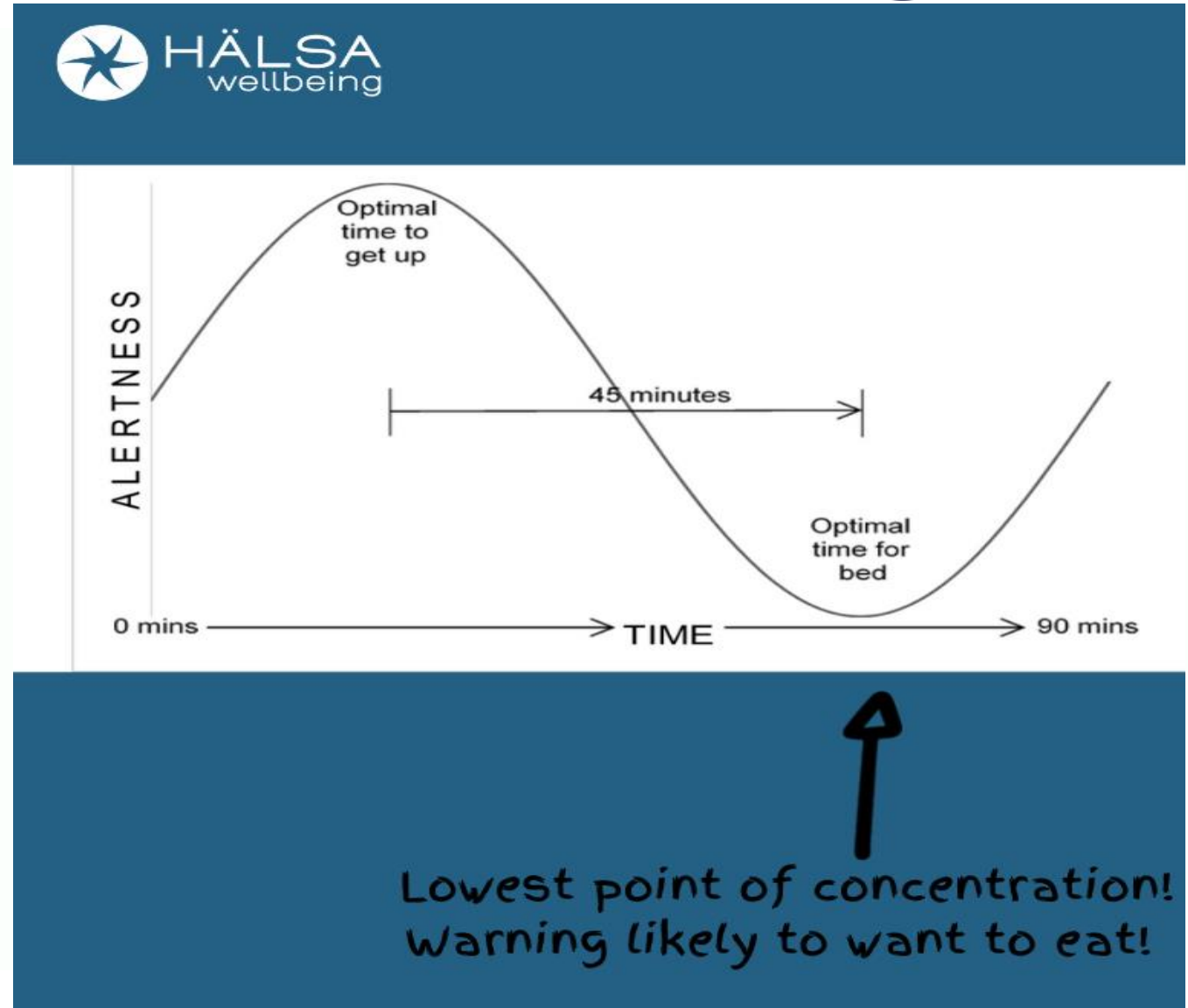
- ✓ Tired
- ✓ Anxious
- ✓ Irritable
- ✓ Depressed
- ✓ Less able to learn and recall skills and information
- ✓ Exacerbate existing symptoms such as pain
- ✓ More likely to have persistent insomnia

ALL MAKING OUR SYMPTOMS WORSE!!!!



Understanding your Sleep Rhythms

- We have a 90 min Circadian Rhythm.
- If you go to bed just before you dip you will get to sleep quicker. If you miss the dip, it will take longer for you to go to sleep. Be very aware of the second wind!
- If you are trying to push through a project or start a task at your lowest dip wait 15 mins and you will soon be on the up.



Lighten your day

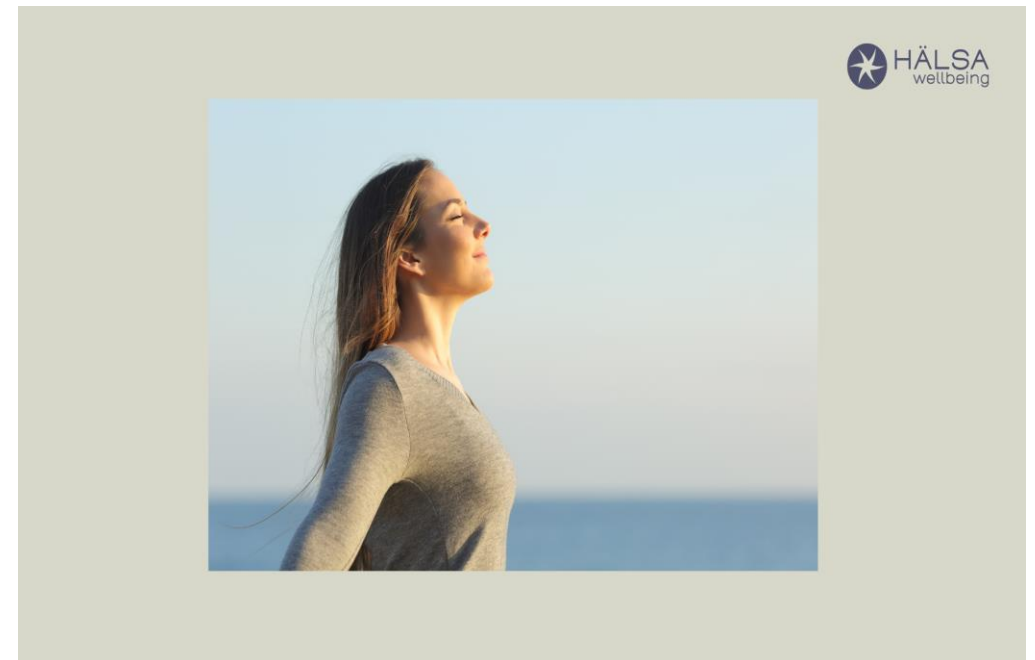
Why light matters

- Our bodies are programmed to go through a 24-hour cycle.
- Our bodies use outside cues, the most powerful of which is natural day light.
- Light pressure is measured in Lux.
 - House lights range from 50 – 300 Lux.
 - Office environments 500 – 800 Lux.
 - Natural day light overcast day is around 1,000 Lux
 - Natural light clear day from 10,000 – 25,000 Lux
- Once there is no more light pressure the body releases melatonin into the brain and blood stream. This flood of melatonin tells the body and the brain it is time for sleep.



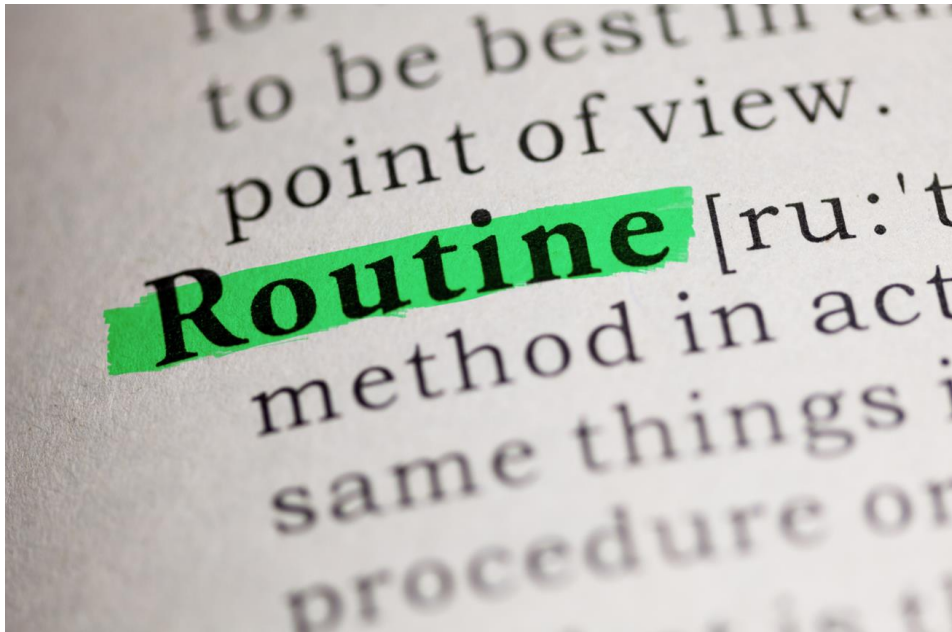
Start your day with light

- Get out first thing! Dawn is especially good since our bodies respond really well to gradual light exposure.
- Receiving blue rays of light outside in the morning and early afternoon, produces Melatonin.
- Get this light preferably before mid-afternoon so if you are leaving the house in the dark schedule a short walk or time outside at lunch if a walk feels too difficult. Ideally for at least 20 mins but the more the better.



Prepare for sleep

Use all your senses



- Preparation is essential to start a good night's sleep.
 - Build yourself an evening ritual to reduce the days stress hormones and thoughts that will have built up throughout the day.
 - Journal for 10 minutes to get rid of ruminating thoughts that have built up over the course of the day. Massage your hands, feet or head before bed, using essential oils such as Lavender/Marjoram or a Sleep Balm can be really powerful to evoke strong triggers to sleep and relaxation.
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- Avoid caffeine after 3pm this includes tea (caffeine stays in your system for 6 hours or more). Slowly cut down and changed to de-caffeinated tea. (Removing this quickly may result in withdrawal symptoms such as headaches).

Breath work

- Breathe in for a count of 4 and out for a count of 8 to stimulate your Parasympathetic nervous system (Rest and Digest system).
- Breathe in through your nose and use your diaphragm. If you are not sure if you are using your diaphragm – lie face down on the floor with your head on the hands and practice breathing. (This restricts you from using your chest and shoulders)
- Eating a large carb meal before bed or drinking will cause you to have a dip in sugars in the middle of the night.
- Eat earlier in the evening and focus on hydration in the morning rather than in the evening. Getting up to use the toilet is one of the biggest disrupters of sleep!



Set an alarm clock



- Move your mobile and get an alarm clock!
- The light on our phones disrupts the release of our natural sleep hormone.
- Checking your emails and messages just before bed is hardly relaxing and may increase the level of cortisol (Stress hormone) in your blood.
- Try and remove blue light from the computer screens and mobile phones, as early as possible – dim the lights and put phones on 'night mode'.
- Set your alarm for your optimal time to wake, it will be much easier to get up.
- Sleep loves routine! Get up at the same time every day to regulate your body's natural sleep hormones.

Enough to get you through



- In a period of insomnia, you may feel stressed just getting to bed.
 - We ideally want to associate our bed and bedrooms as a place of relaxation and sanctuary.
 - We often feel we won't cope without sleep, but we can do quite well with a bit of sleep deprivation. If you have had 4.5 hours of sleep or more, you should be fine to go to work etc.
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- If you can't get to sleep or wake in the night and can't get back to sleep, move out of bed and sit in a chair.
 - Read a book and using a red reading light and have a 'break from your sleep panic'.
 - Get up at 'normal time' the next day, you will feel tired, but it is important to stick to your routine, this will increase your 'sleep pressure' and you will have a better night the next night.

What to do if you are struggling

At Home

- Keep an open dialogue with family and friends
- Allow yourself thinking time and headspace-maintain good boundaries in all areas to keep the balance
- Use essential oils to support your emotional wellbeing
- Factor in some time for YOU: gentle exercise, a long aromatherapy bath, relaxation/meditation exercise
- Mood Swings – think about CBT/Talking Therapies
- Use Vitamin D, B and Magnesium
- Include things like Flax Seeds, Lentils, chickpeas, soya and green vegetables to boost your mood

At Work

- Talk to your Manager
- Be honest



Breathing & Meditation Exercises For Restorative Sleep

Breathwork

- ✓ Short breathing exercise for Anxiety:

[Reduce Anxiety Link](#)

- ✓ Short breathing exercise for finding Calm:

[Finding Calm Link](#)

Breathwork and Meditation

- ✓ Meditation:

[Guided Meditation Link](#)

- ✓ Relaxation:

[Relaxation Meditation Link](#)

- ✓ Body Scan Meditation:

[Body Scan Meditation Link](#)

Useful Resources

[Long COVID: Sleep problems | Long-term effects of COVID-19 \(nhsinform.scot\)](#)

[Long COVID Sleeping well - Your COVID Recovery](#)

[Insomnia - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Sleep problems - Every Mind Matters - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)





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Thank you

Questions?

Feedback/Info – email: info@halsawellbeing.com