
SLEEP

My Kingdom for a Good Night's Sleep!

There is nothing worse than a poor night's sleep or waking up in pain.

When we have neuromuscular pain, it can be difficult to find comfort to rest and sleep well. That goes for low back pain, neck pain or shoulder pain to name a few.

An injury may prevent us from sleeping in our normal position. If you sleep better in the guest room or in another bed while away from home, the likelihood is that it's time for a new mattress.

Placing a pillow between the knees in a side lying position relieves a sore lower back and putting a pillow behind the knees relieves sciatica or leg pain.

Specific stretching before bedtime can be very beneficial, especially if you have been a couch potato all day! Ask your chiropractor.

Sleeping Positions

> **Side** sleeping suits most people. If mattress and pillow are good, we get best support for the spine on the side and we can breathe freely too.

> Some sleep well on their **back**, but breathing can be compromised to the point of snoring.

> **Front** sleeping is as bad as it comes. Twisting the neck leads to long term neck issues and breathing is compromised.



Routine and habits are important for our overall 'sleep physiology'. Once upon a time light meant awake and darkness meant asleep! Going to bed at regular times and limiting light at night improves our sleep.

Mattress

- All mattresses have a lifetime of max 10-12 years
- Pocket sprung with foam filling is the best allrounder
- Turn your mattress head to toe every 2-4 weeks
- Firm enough to support pelvis and lower back
- Soft top for shoulder support



Sleeping Baby:

- Routine & regularity

- 'White noise' may help feeling safe

- In your bedroom until 12 months old

- Burped & Winded

- Not too hot

- Sunshine and fresh air when awake

- Co-sleep if safe and comfortable

- Take care to not overstimulate

- Have Chiro checkups regularly, to clear any physical discomfort

Sleeping well and waking up rested and comfortable, largely rules out sleep as a factor causing neck pain.

Of course many of us don't sleep so well. Sleeping on the front requires the neck to twist so that we can breathe. Falling asleep in front of the TV is not much better. In the summer, draft from aircon or fans can make the muscles contract on one side and hence you wake up with a stiff and sore neck.

Waking up in Pain

"What happened? I felt fine when I went to bed, but I woke up in agony!"

This may reflect an underlying issue, where sleeping in a poor position was what 'broke the camel's back'. Or the bed was terrible.

A firm, contoured pillow is much more supportive than old duck down ones. The pillow should hug the C-curve in the neck nicely and allow the neck to be in line with the rest of the spine. This reduces snoring too.

Sleeping Babies to Teenagers

The sleeping landscape changes dramatically when a baby arrives. It pays dividends to put in time and effort getting the sleep routine worked out.

The growing years from preschoolers, through the primary school years are typically less challenging, until the teenager arrives. Re-establishing healthy day/ night routines are important, but it is also necessary for us to accept that they have extra sleep requirements, often straight after school. The growing into an adult body requires new hardware. It is time to update the mattress, if not the bed, to adult metrics.

"I had a great night sleep!"

Good sleep is as undervalued as good health. Sleeping free of discomfort and pain is sometimes the last pillar in the recovery of an injury. Hence, your chiropractor will quiz you about the state of your sleep. Don't underestimate how good your body can feel for you to sleep like a king!

Rob will be away on holidays from Friday 28/6 until Monday 24/7.