



# afacare Supporting your mental health and well being

**40% of Aussies  
are sleep-deprived**

Here's 4 sleep hacks that can help



### Chelsea Pottenger

Chelsea Pottenger is a world expert in delivering cognitive tools to recharge the human brain. Chelsea works with major companies like

Ebay, Uber, Telstra and Mercedes Benz. She is mental health ambassador for R u Ok? and The Gidget Foundation, and director of EQ Consulting.

In my job, I work alongside a range of organisations looking to get the best out of their employees, by delivering cognitive tools to recharge the human brain. I noticed the number of people I worked with who confessed to getting inadequate sleep was higher than expected, so I surveyed 100,000 and found a whopping 40% of us are getting less than six hours' sleep a night.

Why does it matter? From an employer's perspective, the Australian economy loses \$17.9B annually in productivity due to sleep deprivation according to Deloitte report, Asleep on the job: Costs of inadequate sleep in Australia. Underslept employees will: take on fewer challenges; choose simpler tasks rather than producing high-quality work; produce fewer creative ideas and solutions to challenges given to them; and are likely to slack off (social loafing) where they ride the coat tails of other people's work.

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From a personal perspective, physical and mental fitness suffer with only 5-6 hours sleep. Cardiovascular fitness goes down by 30%; people surviving on 5-6 hours sleep, eat 200-300 extra calories a day, which equates to 70,000 calories per year and a 10kg weight gain; insufficient sleep across a life span is one of the most significant contributors to Alzheimer's; and insomnia walks hand in hand with a rise in anxiety. So, here are my top tips to get better sleep.

### Sleep Hack #1 – Keep your socks on

Bin the pyjamas, it's the socks that count. Your brain needs to drop its temperature by a few degrees to initiate sleep and pyjamas keep you warm rather than cool you down. By removing them and simply keeping your socks on, you will coax the blood away from your core and thermal dump the heat required for a good night's shut-eye.

### Sleep Hack #2 – Turn Screens Off

A staggering 83% of Australians are 'Melatonin Vampires', looking at their phone or watching a screen in the 30 minutes before bed. This exposure to light before bed is pushing their biological clock in the wrong direction and affecting their melatonin production.

Insufficient sleep is linked to cancer of the bowel, prostate and breast cancer. The association between the two has become so powerful that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has classified any form of night shift work as a probable carcinogen.

### Sleep Hack #3 – Two standard drinks only

Avoid taking the edge off a long day with a drink. Alcohol is a central nervous system depressant, yet is more likely to disrupt sleep than caffeine or nicotine. People metabolise alcohol at the rate of one drink per hour but the withdrawal effects persist for another two to four hours, which is when people often feel restless. More than two standard drinks will interrupt deep REM sleep.

### Sleep Hack #4 – No caffeine after noon

Only 10% of the population can metabolise caffeine before bed, the rest take 4-8 hours for it to be eliminated from their system unless they are extra sensitive and suffer hyper-arousal in which case it is even longer.

Sleep is critical for emotional first aid and mental health, which is why I've launched my new EQ Sleep 2.0 program. The 28-day online program empowers people to make positive changes to their daily life to reduce stress, improve sleep and boost energy.

**Learn more...** about recharging your brain at:  
[eqconsultingco.com](http://eqconsultingco.com)