Getting good sleep – so you can be your best self!
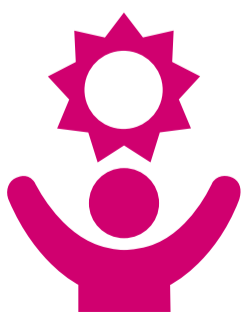
Things to do:

Expose yourself to light – it helps the brain to tell the body to raise its temperature and produce hormones like cortisol (our wakefulness hormone).

- Let as much natural light into your home and workspace as possible during the day.
- Spend time outside, get some sunshine, and fresh air during your day.
- If you are a night shift worker, consider if the lighting you have is adequate.

Physical activity - Exercise might not cure complaints, but it will help!
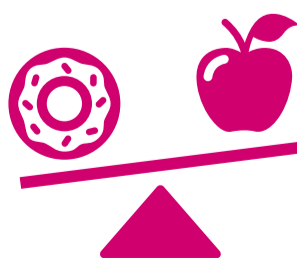
- Both aerobic and resistance exercise can be effective.
- The recommended amount is at least three 30 minute sessions per week, of moderate to vigorous exercise.

Nutrition – what to avoid, and what to do:

- Avoid:
  - Alcohol. This might act as a sedative, helping you fall asleep. Later at night, in the second half of your sleep, this acts as a sleep disrupter.
  - Eating a big meal before bedtime, particularly if you have acid reflux. It can take 2-3 hours to digest a meal, and this can disrupt sleep.
  - Caffeine before bedtime. It is a stimulant (speeds up messages between the brain and body), and this acts as a sleep disrupter. Studies show that caffeine even 6 hours before bed can disrupt our sleep by up to 1 hour.
  - Spicy foods before bedtime. They can cause heartburn and bloating, making it difficult to sleep.
  - High fat foods. These are linked to fragmented sleep, and day time sleepiness.

- Foods with nutrients that provide the building blocks for good sleep:
  - Magnesium in nuts, seeds, leafy green and bananas.
  - B6 vitamin in fish, beans and poultry.
  - Tryptophan in chickpeas, seaweed, egg whites, pumpkin seeds and turkey.
  - Melatonin; rich in cherries.

Expose yourself to light

Physical activity

Nutrition