

## Is good sleep a blessing for ageing? (Week 2)

### 睡眠失調的成因

#### Causes of Sleep Disturbances

除了年齡的影響，很多因素亦可能會導致睡眠失調的情況，以下是一些可能的原因：  
Apart from age, many other factors might have caused sleep disturbances, such as:

- 生理因素：痛楚、便秘、尿頻、脫水、過飢過飽、飲食習慣不當、過多午睡、過往生活習慣……等  
Physiological factors: pain, constipation, frequent micturition, dehydration, overeating or undereating, unhealthy eating habits, lengthy daytime naps, past habits, etc.
- 環境因素：不習慣陌生環境、與陌生人共用睡房、受周邊環境的聲音、燈光及佈置影響……等  
Environmental factors: unfamiliar environment; sharing a bedroom with unfamiliar people; noise, lights, or settings in the surrounding environment
- 心理因素：緊張、擔心、焦慮、傷心難過、過度興奮……等  
Psychological factors: stress, worries, anxiety, sorrow, over excitement, etc.
- 病理因素：很多疾病都會影響人的睡眠，例如阿茲默氏症 (Alzheimer's disease)、帕金森症 (Parkinsonism)、睡眠窒息症 (Sleep apnea)、哮喘 (Asthma) 或呼吸系統疾病、週期性肢動症 (Periodic Limb Movements in sleep, PLMS)、心臟衰竭 (Congestive heart failure)……等  
Pathological factors: various kinds of diseases may affect sleep, e.g., Alzheimer's disease, Parkinsonism, sleep apnea, asthma or respiratory diseases, Periodic Limb Movements in sleep (PLMS), and congestive heart failure
- 藥物影響：鎮靜抗抑鬱藥 (Sedative antidepressants)、抗膽鹼劑 (Anticholinergic)、β-受體阻滯藥 (Beta-blockers)、類固醇藥 (Corticosteroids)、袪水利尿劑 (Diuretics)、黃酮嘌呤茶鹼 (Xanthines theophylline) ……等  
The influence of medications: sedative antidepressants, anticholinergic, beta-blockers, corticosteroids, diuretics, xanthines theophylline, etc.

我們可以如何幫助他人，或在年齡漸長時遇到睡眠問題，該如何自處？

沒有取得足夠的睡眠，尤其是有質素而讓我們恢復精神的睡眠，可能因此引起不同的健康問題，包括脾氣變得暴躁、精神不能集中、記憶力和推理能力下降，伴隨在白晝常常很睏倦和打瞌睡，打瞌睡卻沒有幫助。這樣又會進一步影響正常的睡眠模式。要做到一夜好眠，我們需找出並對付問題背後的原因，而非表面的癥狀。

So, how can we help others or ourselves if we experience sleep problems as we get older? Without adequate sleep and most particularly quality restorative sleep, we may be victim to a number of health issues. These include irritability, inability to concentrate, poor mental reasoning and memory recall coupled with daytime sleepiness and napping. Yet, daytime napping may not help. It can further disrupt the normal sleep pattern. In order to get a good night's sleep, we need to identify and tackle the underlying cause and not the symptoms.

睡眠問題對於有認知障礙的長者尤其明顯。也變成住進院舍的原因。認知障礙症人士就睡眠有關的挑戰，他們可能出現的情況包括有：

Sleep problem is particularly acute among the elderly suffering from dementia. It becomes one of the main causes for their residing in care homes. The problems faced by people with dementia may include:

1. 睡眠不足  
Insufficient sleep
2. 過度睡眠  
Excessive sleep
3. 睡眠時間不規律  
Irregular sleeping hours
4. 因睡眠情況而引起的情緒及行為波動  
Mood swings or behavioural problems arising from sleep conditions

以上的情況，對一般長者而言，亦有機會出現。視乎出現種類、頻次、嚴重性、對有睡眠問題長者及家人/照顧者的影響，會有不同的處理方法。在全球人口老化的環境下，我們究竟有沒有處理和照顧到長者的睡眠問題？

The above conditions might also happen to the older people in general. Depending on the nature of the problems, their frequency, seriousness, and the impact on the elderly and their family/carers, there are different ways of handling them. In the context of a global population ageing, have we actually given adequate attention and care to sleep problems among the older people?

以下章節希望以有系統的方法，讓照顧者能有效的改善有睡眠問題長者的情況，以提升他們的生活質素。

The following sections hope to offer carers a systematic way to help older people with sleep problems to improve their sleep conditions and enhance their quality of living.

### 促進酣睡小錦囊

#### Tips for Enhancing Sleep Quality

任何用作安眠及鎮靜的藥物處方都會令長者在日間時間仍然昏睡呆滯，同時增加長者跌倒及意外的風險。而且研究指出長期使用這些藥物亦未必能改善長者的睡眠質素。所以，要促進長者的睡眠質量應先以非藥物方法處理。

Sleeping pill or prescribed sedatives may lead to daytime drowsiness of older people. This increases their risks of falling and accidents. Studies have also shown that a prolonged use of such drugs may not help improve the sleep quality of older people. Thus, we should consider first a non-pharmacological approach to their sleep quality.

在面對長者的睡眠問題時，照顧者可以參考以下的行動策略方案：

In facing sleep problems of the older people, carers can refer to the following action plan:

1. 身體 Physical
2. 心智 Mind
3. 社交 Social
4. 環境與科技配合 Environment & Assistive Technology

## 1. 身體：

### Physical condition:

身體情況與睡眠挑戰有著不可分割的關係，照顧者可嘗試了解以下的情況：

Sleep problems are inseparable with one's physical conditions. Carers should perhaps try to explore the following factors:

#### a. 身體不適？

##### Physical discomfort?

- i. 很多時身體上出現的小毛病/異常情況，因病情影響而未能用言語表達。身邊人士如未能及時察覺的話，痛楚及其他不適的感覺便會影響患者的睡眠。很多時，照顧者都會忽略長者失眠的情況是因身體毛病而引起並會指是年老而來的改變或認知障礙的進程而必然發生的事情。照顧者宜多了解長者的身體狀況，這樣就更能分辨出睡眠障礙的成因

Minor ailments or abnormalities in the body might not have been expressed properly by the older person. If such conditions are not noted in time by the people around them, pain and other discomfort might have affected the older person's sleep. A lot of time, carers might overlook the insomnia caused by the elderly's body conditions, and attribute it simply to old age or dementia. Carers should try to understand the body conditions of the older person, which can help identify causes behind the sleep disturbance more easily.

- ii. 部份藥物可能會令長者昏睡，從而打亂了睡眠的習慣。照顧者宜與醫生探討情況並由醫生決定相應的藥物處方。照顧者絕對不能自行調較藥物，否則有可能出現不可預見的情況

Some medications might cause drowsiness and therefore, disrupt one's sleep habits. Carers should discuss the elderly's condition with their doctors who should then determine the prescription. Carers must not readjust the dosage on their own, otherwise unpredictable consequences might be resulted.

#### b. 進食習慣

##### Eating habits

- i. 晚餐的安排會影響夜間睡眠，因為過飢或過飽都會令人難以入睡。

Dinner arrangements might affect nighttime sleep, as overeating or starving may lead to problems initiating sleep.

- ii. 晚餐以清淡為主，並與睡眠時間保持2-3小時間距，以免因長者消化力弱，食物停留於胃部內而影響入睡

Having a light dinner with at least a 2-3 hours' interval before sleep. Lest the elderly have weak digestive capacity will have food staying in the stomach, and affects their sleep

- iii. 傍晚後避免進食刺激性食物及飲品，如茶、有汽或酒精飲料，及含咖啡因的食品及飲料，如巧克力

Avoid having stimulating food and drinks in the evening, such as tea, carbonated or alcoholic beverages, as well as food and drinks that contain caffeine, such as chocolates.

- iv. 晚飯後減少進水量，尤其有尿頻問題的長者。應避免於晚間使用袪水利尿劑，以減少晚間起床如廁的需要，  
Reduce water intake after dinner especially for older people who have frequent urination. Avoid taking diuretics at night so as to reduce getting up at night for the toilet
- v. 空腹的感覺會影響入睡，所以如長者於晚間感到飢餓，可為其準備一份輕盈的小食滿足飽肚感  
An empty stomach may hinder sleep. One can prepare a light snack for the elderly should they feel hungry at night
- vi. 色胺酸 (Tryptophan) 是一種可促進大腦分泌褪黑激素的氨基酸，所以於晚間進食含有色胺酸的食物可令人較易於入睡。奶類食品是其中較為人所認識的例子，所以坊間流行的說法是鼓勵受睡眠失調困擾的人在睡前飲一杯暖奶。其他含有色胺酸的食物包括：雞肉、香蕉、蛋類、燕麥、乳酪、蕃薯等。  
Tryptophan is a kind of amino acid that stimulates the brain to produce melatonin. Eating food that contains tryptophan at night can help initiating sleep. Dairy products are one of the best-known examples. That is why it has been said that drinking a warm glass of milk before sleep can help easing sleep disturbance. Other food that contains tryptophan includes chicken, banana, eggs, yoghurt, and sweet potatoes.
- vii. 配合進食含有碳水化合物及蛋白質的食物，可促進色胺酸更易被傳送至腦部。這些組合包括：燕麥餅、燕麥配鮮奶、花生醬配多士、芝士夾餅。  
Taking together with food products that contain carbohydrates and proteins can facilitate the moving of tryptophan to the brain, which includes: oatmeal cookies, oatmeal with milk, peanut butter with toasts, and cheese sandwich biscuits.
- viii. 以上例子主要都是來自外國的文獻，未必適合華裔長者的口味。因此，照顧者可嘗試準備較為合適他們的食物作為宵夜小食，例如：稀粥，清湯或麵，及在進食前為他們加熱食物。  
The above examples come from overseas documentations and may not suit the tastes of the Chinese elderly. Carers can prepare more suitable food for their meals as a snack, such as congee, light soup or noodles, and heat up the food before their consumption
- ix. 甘菊 (Camomile) 有鎮靜神經的作用。所以亦可嘗試為難以入睡的長者泡一杯暖的甘菊茶。  
Camomile has a calming effect. Carers can try a cup of warm chamomile tea for the hard-to-sleep elders.

### c. 運動的需要性

#### The necessity for exercise

- i. 運動及體能訓練對改善長者睡眠有正面作用。當長者在日間進行體能活動時，肌肉、關節及全身都在活動，除了帶來訓練效果、促進血液循環外，更會帶來疲倦感，會有利長者晚間的睡眠。假如日間時間沒有體能活動參與，更甚者沒有任何活動的話，長者很多時會打瞌睡。到晚間時就會未能入睡而做成惡性循環，因此合適的運動是有必要的。

Exercise and physical training have a positive effect on improving sleep quality of older people. As the older people take part in daytime physical activities, their muscles, joints, and whole body are active. In addition to the training effect, and improves blood circulation, it also brings a sense of tiredness to the person. It will be beneficial to improve their nighttime sleep. However, if they do not engage in physical activities during the day, they may often doze off. The older person will then fail to fall asleep at night and creates a vicious circle. That is why adequate exercise is essential.

- ii. 現時坊間都有不同的運動項目供不同身體情況的長者參與。在選擇上，照顧者需留意以下事項：

There exists a variety of exercise programmes that cater for the elderly with different physical conditions. Carers should pay attention to the following when selecting the activities:

- i. 長者動機及能力：這個是初初引入體能訓練最困難的一部份，因為患者會不明其目的，並且感到辛苦而不願繼續。因此照顧者在選擇時可簡單解釋訓練目的，一同參與，並選擇兩種訓練予長者選擇，使他知道是有選擇權，同時在難度上應由淺入深，避免打擊參與性

The motivation and ability of the older person. This is the most difficult part of introducing physical training at the beginning. The older person may not understand the purpose for such activity, and end up feeling tired and unwilling to continue. Carers can explain briefly the purpose of the training beforehand and participate together the activity. Offers two types of training for selection, so to make the older person knows that there is a choice.. The level of difficulty should also be adjusted to begin with the easier training, so as not to undermine their motivation.

- ii. 時間上的選擇：一般而言，較理想的時間為每天早餐後一小時開始，每次 30 分鐘。由於長者在上午時間較為清醒，參與度會高。當然每位長者的特性各有不同，照顧者可找出長者參與度最好的時間來進行訓練。

Choice of time: Generally speaking, the ideal time of training is one hour after breakfast every day for 30 minutes. As older people are usually more alert in the morning, the level of participation will be high. Of course, this may differ from person to person. Carers should pick a time that can best engage the older person.

- iii. 由簡單開始：一開始時，可嘗試以十分鐘訓練為單位，進行三次，成功率會比一開始三十分鐘為好。同時，步行亦是一種容易入手的項目，照顧者亦可參與其中。  
**Start with simple:** One can begin with a 10-minute work-out and do it thrice. The success rate will be better than 30 minutes in the one go. Walking is a good starting point that carers can participate as well.
- iv. 服裝要舒適：為長者預備一套稱身的運動服，每次換上就能慢慢建立其對做訓練的認知。不要使用家中睡衣作為運動服以免長者混亂  
**Comfortable clothing:** Prepare a fitting set of sportswear for the older person, so that they will be accustomed to the idea of physical training whenever they change into the sportswear. Do not use pajamas for sportswear, as it may confuse the older person.
- v. 確保安全：在戶外進行體能活動，隨了空間較大外，更能讓長者接觸陽光、與朋友/街坊會面，更能讓長者與社區連接，為了確保長者的安全及預防突發情況，照顧者應為長者配備個人資料名牌，以便在需要時使用。  
**Ensuring safety:** Physical activity outdoors can allow the elderly to take advantage of the larger space. The elderly can be exposed to the sun, meet with friends/ neighbourhood, and enable the elderly to connect with the community. In order to ensure their safety in unforeseeable circumstances, they should each be equipped with a name tag that contains their personal information.

## 2. 心智：

Mind:

心智是長者的認知能力，例如記憶力、專注力、判斷力、邏輯運算能力等與大腦相關的表現，以及情緒上的表達，如開心、積極、憤怒、低落等等。尤其對認知障礙症人士與睡眠有關的挑戰，日落症候群常見於認知障礙的長者，症狀呈現於日落後認知障礙情況變得明顯，例如混亂、緊張、焦慮不安、情緒波動、心煩意亂、顫抖等；以致於晚間出現各種可構成危險的行為。文獻中顯示多達六成有認知障礙的長者都曾有此綜合症的症狀。當出現睡眠障礙時，家人及照顧人員可嘗試以下列建議的方法分析及處理：

The mind is the cognitive ability of the older person. It includes memory, concentration, judgement, logical and mathematical ability, as well as emotional expressions such as happiness, positivity, anger, and dejection. Especially for the sleep-related challenges of people with cognitive impairment, the sundowning syndrome is often found among people suffering from dementia. The symptoms tend to manifest in late afternoon, includes confusion, nervousness, anxiety, mood swings, agitation, and trembling. This can, thus, lead to various dangerous behaviours in the nighttime. Studies have shown that over 60% of the older people suffering from dementia have the syndrome. When sleep disturbances occur, family members and carers can try the following ways to analyze and manage:

### a. 嘗試了解長者的認知能力程度：

Understand the person's cognitive ability:

- i. 對認知障礙症人士來說，記憶力的減弱已經能造成睡眠障礙。曾有長者表示他晚間需要當物業管理員的工作，因此要在日間睡覺，以便晚間工作。但長者已經退休，因此當晚上來臨時，會嚷著外出工作，與家人吵鬧，並影響家人休息。長者的記憶力仍停留在以前的時光，與現在的身份出現混亂情況。在這情況下，我們建議用長者退休時的一些證明，如相片，影片等，一步步讓長者知道其角色上的轉變；另外可帶長者到以前工作地方以作解說，讓他了解現況。當然不同的長者會出現不同的可能性，家人及照顧人員需定期檢視長者的認知能力，與醫護人員表達長者在家或院舍情況，這才能為長者制定更好的介入計劃。

The declining memory itself can cause sleep disturbances among people suffering from dementia. An elderly person once claimed that, as an estate night guard, he had to sleep during the day. Yet, the person was actually retired but would quarrel with his family in the evening, arguing that he had to go out to work, and affect his family rest. The person's memory had stayed in the past, which got confused with his present identity. In such a situation, we suggest making use of the visual records of the person's retirement, such as photographs or videos, to allow the person to gradually know the change. In addition, one can bring the person to his former working place to explain to him the present circumstances. Of course, the reactions differ from person to person, and family members and carers should regularly assess the cognitive ability of the elderly and convey the person's conditions at home or residential home to the relevant medical staff. This will help formulate a good intervention plan for the person.

必須記住三個不和三個 R

Remember the 3 Ds and 3 Rs

- ✓ 不要爭論  
Do not argue
- ✓ 不要勸說  
Do not reason
- ✓ 不要糾正  
Do not correct
- 安慰（Reassure）、回應（Respond）、重新聚焦別處（Refocus）  
Reassure, Respond, and Refocus

亦即是要：

- ✓ 認可他們說的話
- ✓ 給予簡單回應
- ✓ 改變行為方向

重要的是照顧者要建立尊重和不同的應對模式。

That is to: Acknowledge what they are saying, give a brief response, and redirect. It is important for carers to develop individualized approaches with respect when managing behaviours of people with dementia.

- ii. 判斷能力障礙亦有可能影響長者的睡眠情況。他們可能對合適的睡眠時間沒有確切的概念，有機會在日間天色昏暗時就表示需要休息，但當到晚間時不願睡覺。家人及照顧人員可嘗試為長者制定時間表，並在屋內/院舍設置合適的時鐘以讓長者理解什麼時間是休息，什麼時間是需要活動，使用環境提示外，更應與長者多作溝通以給予他們肯定的信心。Judgement impairment may also affect the older person's sleep conditions. They may have no concept of the proper time for sleep. They may decide to retire to bed in the daytime when it is overcast and cannot sleep again at night. Family members and carers can set up a timetable for the older person, install clocks in the house or residential home, showing the older person when the resting hours and activity hours are. Apart from the reminders set up in their surroundings, it is important to communicate with the older person to give them positive confidence.



- iii. 另一方面，長者的失眠情況亦有機會與導向能力有關。對在院舍居住的長者，他們有可能在晚上燈光昏暗時，找不到睡床的位置，因而出現遊走行為，並影響睡眠質量。建議在環境導向上增加對長者的訓練，令長者認識如何找到自己的床位並在適合的時間睡眠。就算在家居環境中，適量的標誌亦能提升長者的導向能力及減低不安感。家人及照顧人員制作導向標示時，應以長者明白的方式制作，字體上亦應以長者能清楚看到為參考的標準，。

Insomnia in older people can also be caused by the orientation ability. The older person who live in residential home may have problems finding their own bed under the dim light at night and end up wandering around, which affect their sleep quality. Carers are suggested to offer more orientation training for the elderly, so that the latter know how to find their own bed and sleep at the appropriate time. Even in a home setting, adequate signage can help enhance the older person's orientation and lessen their sense of uneasiness. When preparing such signage, the family members and carers should make it understandable to, and in a font type and size readable by, the older people.

b. 情緒上如何調整以改善長者的睡眠狀況

How to readjust one's emotional state to help improving the sleep quality of the older person

- i. 極端的情緒表現都有可能影響長者的睡眠，並對家人及照顧人員造成不同程度的心理影響。

Extreme emotional outbursts may affect the older person's sleep quality, as well as the psychological health of the family members and carers.

- ii. 家人及照顧人員在面對長者的情緒時，不宜過度反應，以免刺激長者及讓他們覺得這樣的表達方法能得到其他人的關心。在確保安全情況下，家人及照顧人員宜以認同的態度來回應長者的情緒表達，例如當長者表達恐慌時，家人可以說：『我知道你現在可能有事情令你感到驚慌，但我會在你身邊，不如你告訴我你現在想什麼？』。這樣的回應會讓長者覺得有人關心及明白他們的情況，但在回應時，不必對他們的表達認同或否定，因為長者可能出現幻覺的情況。

The family members and carers should avoid overreacting towards the older person's emotional outburst, as it might further agitate them and make them think of it as a way to gain others' attention and care. As long as the situation is safe, the family and carers can respond to the elderly's emotional expressions with a positive attitude. For instance, when the older person expressed panic, a family member can perhaps answer, "I understand that something is causing you to panic, but I'll be by your side. Why don't you tell me what you are thinking?" Such a response can convey to the person your concern and understanding. You do not have to show your approval or disagreement, as the older person might be suffering from hallucination.

- iii. 過度歡樂亦有機會影響長者得睡眠。在日間時，長者參與開心的活動，晚上仍可能保持興奮的心情而未能入睡。這不是指要禁止長者參與任何活動，更積極的方法是長者分享他的感受，讓他的情感得以表達，對長者及身邊的人都是有益處的

Being overjoyed might also affect older people's sleep. If they have taken part in joyful activities during the day, they might still stay excited at night and fail to sleep. This does not mean that one should forbid older people from participating in any activity. Instead, one should encourage older people to share their feelings, which is beneficial both to themselves and to the people around them.

- iv. 情緒是每人都擁有的，當家人及照顧人員在面對長者的睡眠障礙時，不妨想想情緒上的影響。觀察情緒並不能單單因一個情況而下判斷，需要時應對其做記錄，包括情緒的類別，出現時間，頻次，當時的處理方法等，不要少看這些資料，當記錄下來，在視覺化的資料會提供很多線索，讓家人，照顧人員，醫護人員知道如何有效控制及改善情緒，從而改善睡眠。

Everyone has his/her own emotions. Facing the older person suffering from sleep disturbances, family members or carers should perhaps consider the emotional impact of the older person. Observing one's emotional state cannot be judged by one situation alone. A record is required that includes types of emotion, time of occurrence, frequency, and the way of handling it at the time. Do not underestimate the value of such a record. It helps us visualize the clues, so that the family members, carers, and health care workers can find solutions to effectively manage and improve their emotions, thereby improving their sleep.