

How to sleep well before a big event

Added by Ellen Nicholson on 05 Aug 2016

Getting enough good quality sleep is one of the most effective performance enhancing tools in your toolbox.

But sleeping well at a big event like PyeongChang 2018 (below) can be difficult; more than 80% of athletes report problems falling asleep before a competition.



Here are 4 tips to help you get a good night's sleep:

1. Create a routine

Falling asleep the night before a big event is easier if a pattern of going to sleep at a regular time has already been established. Take extra care not to do anything that might disturb sleep later – like eating a heavy meal too late or consuming too much caffeine.

2. Avoid technology

Don't use items such as mobiles or laptops within an hour of going to sleep - the brightness of the screens can increase your brains alertness and consequently the quality of your sleep. You could do some stretching or reading to focus your mind and reduce any anxiety.

3. Try to switch off

Set time aside in the early evening to get everything ready and review your performance worries for no longer than 15-30 minutes; then stop. If you find yourself returning to the subject in bed – just tell yourself you've 'done that' – and move on.

4. Don't worry

If you worry, your brain is going to alert itself to a problem out there and it is going to try to keep you awake. Try not to over-rate the consequences of delayed sleep. Getting less sleep (or poor quality sleep) before any major event is normal – but in itself, it is unlikely to affect performance.