

Pillow Talk: The secret to a good night's sleep



By Hong Kong Tatler

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Shleep Focus

Indi McCullough, founder of Shleep and Kate Bridle, lead sleep specialist of Sleep HQ share expert sleep advice

Living in a restless city like Hong Kong means sleep deprivation is a reality to many of us. In prioritising work over sleep, we put ourselves at growing risk for weight gain, heart disease and mental stress, alongside many counter-intuitive [health problems](#).

Thankfully, there are several ways to get your sleep pattern back on track. The sleep environment you create for your body and mind is a key factor that determines your sleep quality, from the moment you prepare yourself for bed to the feeling you wake up to the next morning. [Shleep](#), a luxury sleep products and lifestyle brand designs a cosy range of fine Australian merino wool bedding and nightwear uniquely crafted to be luxuriously smooth and soft, which makes for the best formula for a perfect night's sleep.

In celebration of Shleep's recent launch in [Lane Crawford's](#) Pacific Place home store and global online store as part of Lane Crawford's ongoing commitment to guide its customers on a journey of health and wellness, we sat down with Indi McCullough, founder of Shleep and Kate Bridle, lead sleep specialist of [Sleep HQ](#) to talk about sleep patterns, bedtime routines and everything in between.

K: Kate Bridle; I: Indi McCullough

Why should we care about sleep?

K: A lot of people don't realise when we're asleep, the brain is more metabolic and there are so many physiological processes going on, which are essential for us to function in the day time. We build up a lot of toxins in the brain during the day, and it's only when we sleep at night that the toxins are cleared, and those toxins are the ones associated with Alzheimer's disease and other memory disorders.

Indi, as someone who was once a hard-driving businesswoman, what advice would you give to individuals who prioritise work over sleep?

When I was in New York, I was working crazy hours in advertising and was one of those people who think no sleep is better. My health was affected directly as a result. It's very important to understand that sleep is entirely connected to everything you do. It's not just how you feel the next day. I'd say, put the work down, and prioritise sleep to make yourself more productive.



Photo: Jensen Hoi/ Hong Kong Tatler

What is good quality sleep and what are the factors that affect it?

K: We sleep in cycles of around 90 minutes going through light sleep, deep sleep and dream sleep. It's about not being interrupted during the sleep cycles and waking up feeling refreshed. In a place like Hong Kong, we have a lot of issues like light and noise pollution and the air quality and it's a city that is very hot and humid as well. So we need to address these problems in order to get a good quality sleep.

I: 30 years of research has told us that you sleep faster by 25% surrounded by wool and you'll stay in deep sleep for longer. The key benefit of Merino wool is that wool absorbs 35% of its own weight in water, so it's highly breathable and it reacts to body temperature to ensure long quality sleep.

What sets Shleep apart from other bedding and sleepwear brands?

I: We talk about ourselves as a wellness brand and we use only the finest wool in the world. Our fleece is made from an innovative fabric that no one else has. We have a 100% wool fabric that is water, UPF and wind resistant, which doesn't exist on the market. So we are pushing innovation and our range is very diverse, from baby, toddlers to adults and even pets.

K: Loving sleep, getting that relationship back with sleep and looking forward to going to bed at night is about having a bed that you'd love to climb into at the end of the day—your little sanctuary which is your resting place. Today we're on the go all the time and we don't have any protected downtime anymore, so I think when people start to get passionate about creating a bed environment that's cosy and comfortable, it also regulates your body temperature which means you'll get better quality sleep.



Photo: Jensen Hoi/ Hong Kong Tatler

What are your top tips for preparing the body and mind for bed?

K: A good night sleep starts from the moment you wake up in the morning. Your brain doesn’t have a magic switch to be able to turn it off after a long day, so it’s very important that from the moment you wake up you’re doing some of the right things that will help you to be able to relax quicker and easier at night. For example, waking up at the same time each day will dictate whether you’ll likely be falling asleep easily at the same time each night because of the sleep drive we have.

Second is getting plenty of natural daylight or bright indoor light first thing in the morning. Light controls our sleep-wake cycle along with temperature. Light in the morning will help us produce Melatonin which is a sleep hormone, which will help us relax and fall asleep in the evening. On that point, making sure the light is nice and dim or switching from a bright white light to a softer yellow light in the last couple of hours in the evening will really help to let our mind know that it’s coming up to sleep time.

I: The creative concept of our brand is “makers of the best mornings ever” because we didn’t want to concentrate on sleep only and we agree that the feeling you’d want is that fresh feeling you have in the morning. Personally, I take a bath before sleep and try to cut out alcohol and caffeine completely, which really makes a difference.



Photo: Jensen Hoi/ Hong Kong Tatler

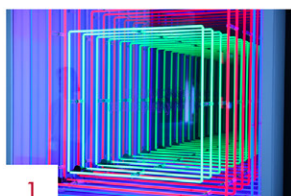
What products would you recommend for a family with a father, mother and baby?

For adults, we have a Shleep System which is based on being surrounded by wool. It contains a fitted sheet, a duvet, a duvet cover and a pillow—if you want the ultimate Merino wool experience. For kids, the playmats are beautiful, and so are the swaddle and stroller sets—there are stats about babies falling asleep faster when surrounded by wool. It has to do with how soft the material is and body temperature regulation. In fact, studies have shown that if you put premature babies on fleece wool, they grow faster.

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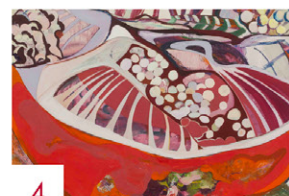
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