



SLEEP: THE UNDERRATED HEALTH ESSENTIAL

Good sleep does more than rest your body. As you sleep, your brain steps up clearance of metabolic waste — including the amyloid-beta protein associated with Alzheimer's. Your immune system strengthens its infection-fighting defences, and your body fine-tunes the hormones governing hunger, stress, and blood sugar.

It touches almost every system at once! Most adults feel their best on 7–9 hours a night. Quality matters as much as quantity — broken or shallow sleep doesn't deliver the same benefits as deep, uninterrupted rest.

If you regularly wake unrefreshed, struggle with insomnia, or your partner has mentioned heavy snoring or pauses in your breathing, your GP is a great first step. Sleep problems are common and very treatable.

[Learn more about sleep health →](#)

AI EYE SCANS REACHING RURAL AUSTRALIA

Diabetic eye disease is the leading cause of vision loss in working-age Australians, and up to 95% of cases are preventable with early detection. The challenge has always been access. In remote communities, seeing an ophthalmologist can mean a long wait, a long drive, or both, and for people juggling multiple health priorities, an eye check often falls to the bottom of the list.

Lions Outback Vision, based in Western Australia, developed an [AI-powered retinal screening tool](#) that lets GPs perform a simple eye scan and receive an instant report flagging signs of diabetic retinopathy, without needing a specialist referral. The technology, born from work in remote Pilbara communities, is now being offered to general practices more widely as a step toward national rollout.

[Learn more about diabetes and eye health →](#)

YOUR HEALTH

DRY JULY: WHAT ALCOHOL-FREE DOES TO YOUR BODY

The changes happen faster than most people expect, and many of them tie directly back to sleep.

One week in: [sleep quality improves](#), blood pressure drops a little, and energy levels become steadier. This isn't a coincidence. Alcohol disrupts the deep, restorative stages of sleep even when it helps you fall asleep faster, so cutting it out often means waking up properly rested for the first time in a while.

Two weeks in: the [liver begins to recover](#) and many people notice clearer skin and sharper concentration. By the end of the month, meaningful reductions in liver fat, cholesterol, and blood sugar are common in regular drinkers.

Dry July is a genuinely useful reset. If you find yourself reluctant to take a month off, or struggling when you try, that's worth a gentle conversation with your GP.

FLU, COLD OR SOMETHING MORE? WHEN TO SEE YOUR GP

Most [colds](#) clear up on their own within 7–10 days with rest and fluids. [Influenza](#) tends to hit faster and feel more intense — sudden fever, aching muscles, and the kind of fatigue that keeps you in bed.

For most people, home care is all that's needed. It's worth seeing your GP if your fever is above 39°C and not improving, your symptoms get worse after initially getting better, or you're in a higher-risk group such as pregnancy, over 65, or living with a chronic condition.

Getting your [flu vaccination](#) is still worthwhile — even mid-season. Protection kicks in within about two weeks.

HEALTH TIPS

Four Sleep Habits That Work

1. Wake at the same time every day, even on weekends
2. No screens for 60 minutes before bed
3. Keep your bedroom cool. Around 18°C is ideal
4. Avoid alcohol within 3 hours of sleep. It disrupts deep sleep stages

? ASK THE DOCTOR

"Is snoring just annoying, or a real health problem?"

Frequent snoring with pauses in breathing can be a sign of [obstructive sleep apnoea](#). It's very treatable once diagnosed. Worth mentioning at your next GP visit.

VITAMIN D IN WINTER

Vitamin D is produced when your skin is exposed to sunlight, which means winter is the season most Australians fall short. Low vitamin D can affect bone health, immune function, and mood.

A short daily walk outside during daylight hours each day helps. Foods like oily fish, eggs, and fortified dairy also contribute.