



According to early modern people, what was sleep for?

What did early modern people wear to bed?

What did early modern people think you should eat before bed?

How many 'sleeps' did early modern people have?

What did early modern people do when they couldn't sleep?

Where did early modern people sleep?



To help digestion

- * The principle purpose of sleep was believed to be to aid digestion. It was during sleep that food was heated, and broken down in the stomach .



- * People were advised to sleep propped up with a pillow to speed up digestion.

Night gowns and caps made from linen or cotton

- * People wore nightcaps to protect their brains at night and keep their heads at a good temperature.
- * They made their bed clothes from linen or cotton as they thought these materials would keep them cool during the night and stop them waking early.
- * Linen was also thought to be clean and hygienic.



The Sleep Walker (London, 1795),

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Not too much!

- * People thought that you should not eat too much before bed as it would make it harder to digest everything during the night.
- * Early modern people also knew not to drink tea or coffee before bed as it could stop you sleeping properly.



Another Slice of Plum Pudding

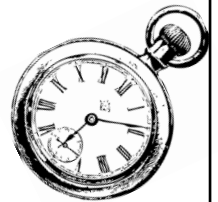
(London, 1774),

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Two



- * In the early modern period people enjoyed two separate sleeps a night.
- * In the time between their first and second sleep, known as the 'waking hour', people would do lots of different activities, from reading and praying, to simple crafts such as embroidery.



Took homemade sleep remedies

- * People made lots of different potions that they thought would help them sleep better.
- * They might drink rose water or a chamomile syrup to relax their mind before bed.
- * They might also place sleepy herbs like lavender under their pillows.



Posset Pot for drinking sleep remedies

(London, 1651),

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Upstairs in bedchambers

- * In this period bedrooms moved upstairs into rooms specially for sleeping.
- * In the medieval period bedrooms were downstairs rooms where lots of different activities took place, not just sleeping.
- * Having a comfortable and clean bed was also very important to early modern people.



Bedstead

(c.1520-1540,

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