# Experts warn against TikTok sleep hacks as risks and doubts grow



Social media platforms, particularly TikTok, have become a hub for viral sleep hacks, ranging from the peculiar to the seemingly beneficial. In a discussion facilitated by Nour Haydar, anti-viral columnist Donna Lu examines these trending solutions, which promise to enhance sleep quality. The claims vary widely, suggesting everything from using melatonin to more unconventional tactics like mouth taping and even feeding butter to babies.

The phenomenon of sleep optimisation, often referred to as 'sleepmaxxing', has garnered considerable attention online. Proponents advocate for various techniques, including utilising sleep masks, implementing specific bedtime routines, and engaging in breathing exercises, such as the 4-7-8 technique, which promotes relaxation. However, medical professionals consistently caution that many of these methods lack rigorous scientific backing. Instead, they recommend evidence-based practices tailored to individual needs. For instance, maintaining a cool, quiet, and dark environment and minimising screen time prior to bedtime are fundamental strategies that are universally endorsed.

Among the more controversial methods gaining traction is mouth taping. Supporters claim it fosters nasal breathing, purportedly reducing problems like snoring and dry mouth. Ancient wisdom has long championed nasal breathing as a healthier alternative, but modern experts have voiced significant concerns over mouth taping's safety and efficacy. While it may assist those with mild sleep apnea or improve the performance of CPAP machines, it's not a catch-all solution. The risks, particularly for individuals with certain respiratory issues or severe apnea, make it a practice that requires cautious consideration and, ideally, consultation with medical professionals.

Despite the appeal of these hacks, a survey conducted by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine revealed that over 40% of respondents have tried some viral sleep strategies. While some individuals may be participating for novelty, others are earnestly seeking solutions to their sleep struggles. Experts stress the importance of not relying on unverified trends but instead focusing on proven routines. In addition to maintaining a regular sleep schedule, limiting exposure to artificial light in the evening, and cultivating a peaceful sleeping environment are paramount.

TikTok hacks like employing pink noise—a soothing, low-frequency sound—or engaging in acupressure are also making waves, although experts urge caution. The effectiveness of pink noise in aiding sleep has some backing, while techniques like acupressure are still undergoing research. Ultimately, experts emphasize that persistent sleep difficulties should not be brushed aside in favour of DIY remedies found on social media. Seeking professional guidance remains crucial for addressing underlying health concerns.

In a culture increasingly fixated on achieving perfect sleep, termed 'orthosomnia', the quest for innovative solutions can lead to an unhealthy obsession with monitoring sleep patterns. The answers to better sleep are not often found in fleeting internet trends but instead lie in embracing simple, sustainable practices tailored to individual needs. As the dialogue on social media continues to flourish, it’s essential to navigate these waters with caution and a discerning eye towards scientific evidence.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/audio/2025/jun/03/why-tiktok-wont-help-you-sleep-full-story-podcast), [[2]](https://time.com/7269178/what-is-sleepmaxxing-sleep-doctors/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[2]](https://time.com/7269178/what-is-sleepmaxxing-sleep-doctors/), [[4]](https://aasm.org/viral-tiktok-trends-are-not-the-answer-for-better-sleep/)
* Paragraph 3 – [[3]](https://time.com/7177855/mouth-taping-benefits-sleep/), [[6]](https://us.neomwellbeing.com/blogs/news/tiktoks-most-popular-sleep-hacks)
* Paragraph 4 – [[4]](https://aasm.org/viral-tiktok-trends-are-not-the-answer-for-better-sleep/), [[7]](https://www.forbes.com/sites/nomanazish/2022/03/27/do-tiktok-sleep-hacks-actually-work-heres-what-the-sleep-experts-say/)
* Paragraph 5 – [[5]](https://www.mamamia.com.au/tiktok-hacks-for-sleep/), [[6]](https://us.neomwellbeing.com/blogs/news/tiktoks-most-popular-sleep-hacks)

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/audio/2025/jun/03/why-tiktok-wont-help-you-sleep-full-story-podcast> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://time.com/7269178/what-is-sleepmaxxing-sleep-doctors/> - This article discusses the 'sleepmaxxing' trend on social media, where individuals adopt various hacks—such as using supplements, sleep masks, or mouth taping—to optimise sleep quality and duration. Medical experts caution that some practices lack scientific support and may be ineffective or even harmful. They advise focusing on proven strategies: maintaining a cool, dark, and quiet sleep environment, minimising screen time before bed, and establishing consistent sleep routines. Tactics like eating kiwis before bed, using white noise machines, and not using an alarm may have limited or inconsistent benefits. Supplements like melatonin and magnesium are not broadly recommended unless medically indicated. Mouth taping is discouraged due to potential health risks. Experts also warn that over-reliance on sleep tracking devices and an obsessive fixation on perfect sleep—dubbed 'orthosomnia'—can backfire and worsen sleep quality. Ultimately, doctors stress that sleep should be approached naturally and that persistent issues should be addressed with medical guidance rather than internet trends.
3. <https://time.com/7177855/mouth-taping-benefits-sleep/> - This article examines the practice of mouth-taping, which has gained popularity on social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram. Proponents claim it reduces snoring, insomnia, and dry mouth by promoting nasal breathing, believed to be healthier. While ancient medical systems have long advocated for nasal breathing, modern experts note that scientific evidence supporting mouth-taping's benefits is limited. It may aid mild sleep apnea but isn't effective for severe cases. Additionally, it may improve the efficacy of CPAP machines for diagnosed sleep apnea patients. However, mouth-taping poses risks, including potential respiratory issues and exacerbating existing medical conditions. Experts warn against using it as a substitute for professional medical advice and emphasise safer alternatives, like side-sleeping and nasal strips, to promote nasal breathing. Consulting a doctor is recommended before trying such DIY methods.
4. <https://aasm.org/viral-tiktok-trends-are-not-the-answer-for-better-sleep/> - This article highlights various unproven strategies to promote sleep that have been trending on social media, such as 'mouth taping' and incorporating more plants in the bedroom. A recent survey from the American Academy of Sleep Medicine found that more than 40% of people admit to trying these viral trends involving sleep. While some users may be attempting the trends for fun, others are looking for real solutions to sleep problems. Experts advise focusing on evidence-based strategies: maintaining a consistent sleep schedule, creating a quiet and relaxing bedroom environment, and limiting exposure to bright light in the evenings. They caution against unproven methods like mouth taping, which can be extremely dangerous, and recommend consulting a doctor for persistent sleep issues.
5. <https://www.mamamia.com.au/tiktok-hacks-for-sleep/> - This article discusses various TikTok sleep hacks, including the use of pink noise and the 4-7-8 breathing technique. Pink noise, a constant low-frequency sound similar to a waterfall, can help relax and block out distracting noises, promoting better sleep. The 4-7-8 breathing technique involves inhaling for four seconds, holding the breath for seven, and exhaling for eight, which can reduce stress and anxiety, aiding in falling asleep. While these methods are popular on TikTok, it's important to approach them with caution and consult with healthcare professionals for persistent sleep issues.
6. <https://us.neomwellbeing.com/blogs/news/tiktoks-most-popular-sleep-hacks> - This article explores eight of TikTok's top trending sleep hacks, including the 4-7-8 breathwork technique, acupressure, mouth taping, listening to pink noise, journaling, and enjoying a warm bath. While some of these methods are popular on TikTok, experts advise caution. For instance, mouth taping is discouraged due to potential health risks, and the efficacy of acupressure and pink noise is still under investigation. It's recommended to consult with healthcare professionals before trying these methods and to focus on evidence-based strategies for improving sleep quality.
7. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/nomanazish/2022/03/27/do-tiktok-sleep-hacks-actually-work-heres-what-the-sleep-experts-say/> - This article examines various TikTok sleep hacks, including rubbing behind the ear (Anmian point) and mouth taping. While some individuals claim these methods help with relaxation and sleep, experts express skepticism. For example, rubbing the Anmian point may influence feelings of relaxation but lacks data supporting its impact on sleep. Mouth taping is cautioned against, especially for individuals with nasal obstructions, as it may not be effective and could pose risks. The article advises consulting with healthcare professionals before trying such methods and focusing on proven sleep strategies.