

Normal sleep and circadian rhythm is fundamental to mental health, well being and maximal athletic performance. The talk will cover the basics of sleep and circadian rhythm including the changes during adolescence and into adulthood.

Sleep duration and quality are recognised as key to maximal training and recovery in elite athletes and yet many factors throughout training and competition can disrupt sleep. Travel across time zones leads to specific challenges in order to manage the circadian rhythm disturbance. The time of training and balancing both training and either academic or work schedules can lead to sleep restriction.

Recognising and managing sleep disorders and the sleep disruption that occurs within elite sports will be discussed alongside the evidence for sleep intervention programmes specific to elite athletes.

There is an array of wearables that claim to measure both sleep duration and the specific sleep cycles but many have little validation data and it is unclear at present what role they may play in either elite or recreational athletes but the research in this advancing technology will be reviewed.

Helping athletes to understand and value sleep should be a key tool to optimise all aspects of mental and physical health. Better nights lead to better days.