



## Dr Adrian Williams' seven steps for a satisfying slumber

- 1** Maintain a sleep conducive environment that is dark, quiet, comfortable and above all cool. Your bedroom should remind you of a bat's cave – bats are champion sleepers, managing around 16 hours a day.
- 2** Mimic air conditioning in your own home using a fan and ice cubes. Point the fan at your bed with the ice cubes in front and ensure the whole bed gets a turn. Or put your sheets and pillow cases in the fridge for a while so they are chilled.
- 3** Shower before bed. Take a cool shower and don't dry off fully. Leaving your hair wet will also keep your body temperature lower. Also take a spray bottle filled with diluted rubbing alcohol to bed get a cool shower feel in the night if needed.
- 4** Change where you sleep. Sleeping in hammock is cooler, as is a water bed set to 85°F. But if you can't afford to splash out on either of those, sleep on or low to the floor, or at least with your feet outside the bed.
- 5** Dress for success. Resist the urge to strip off and sleep nude in hot weather. Wearing loose fitting cotton shorts and shirt will actually be cooler.
- 6** Train your body to keep cooler. Air-con stops your body from learning to cope with warm weather, so avoid it during the day and this will help you take the heat in your stride come night-time.
- 7** Master the basics. Whatever the weather, getting up at the same time, avoiding caffeine, alcohol and nicotine will all help you get a better night's sleep. If you do need to nap, don't sleep after 3pm or for more than 20 minutes.