





## Sleeping; the use of heavy blankets and alternatives

When someone has sleeping problems, adding heavy materials may help. That can be done in different ways; with regular means and with specially developed weighted blankets. Below I discuss a number of options.

### First the regular options

- An old-fashioned sleeping bag, old style blanket, moving blanket or crochet blanket is a solution that is quickly found by sifting through closets, sending emails to family and friends or searching on E-bay. The blankets are heavier than most modern blankets and comforters. They may help enough to make buying a heavy blanket unnecessary. You can put the sleeping bag or blanket in a duvet cover. You can put a crocheted blanket over a duvet.
 

- For the following advice I called my aunt Annie :-). When I stay there, I sleep in the best bed ever!! She does indeed have an old style sleeping bag or blanket in a duvet cover. And the finishing touch is that she uses flannel sheets. I find it wonderful! She uses a flannel mattress cover, a flannel sheet on top and only then the duvet. It causes your body to be surrounded by wonderfully soft flannel.
- A Merino blanket is made of wool and is nice and heavy. You could look on E-bay for a second-hand Merino blanket, as they can be expensive.
- Choose the fabric of the duvet- and pillow covers yourself. Maybe you like having flannel covers. Especially in autumn and winter this is a nice option, in summer it can feel a bit hot.
- Then we arrive at pillows. I myself have four of them lying around me, so that I can put them all around me. Which gives pleasant deep pressure. One of those pillows is a 'side sleeping pillow' or a 'bodypillow'. In addition to a body pillow and regular pillows, you can also add a travel pillow / cuddle bug that you can hold against you. They are usually filled with small polystyrene pellets and are therefore very light and malleable.
 

- Experiencing pressure can also be done in another way, for example by sleeping in a narrow sleeping bag, making you experience pressure every time you move. Or you deliberately lay with your knees bent, pressing against the sides.
- A 'sleeping tunnel' gives deep pressure. Look for sensory sheets or compression bed sheets.

### Specially made options

Then there are specially made heavy blankets on the market. Make sure you are well informed about the weight of the blanket. The user of the blanket must be able to get out from under it independently.





Some blankets are filled with (quarz) sand and made of non-breathable materials. That can make them less suitable for sleeping. This will have to be looked at on a case-by-case basis. A (paediatric) physiotherapist or occupational therapist can support you making a choice. Ask if you can have a trial run for a few weeks.

There are many web shops that make custom blankets and sites that tell you how to make your own. Search for 'weighted blanket'.



Good night and sleep tight!!

If you have any questions, tips or ideas about heavy blankets or alternatives, you can email us at [monique@dutchsensorysolutions.nl](mailto:monique@dutchsensorysolutions.nl).

Kind Regards,  
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