



THE SLEEP MIRACLE

Use These Science-Backed Natural Remedies To
Regain Deep, Restorative Sleep Every Night

Nutrition and Diet

The way you eat has a big effect on the way you sleep. Whether it's your diet overall or what you're consuming right before bed. There are a lot of myths and misguided beliefs out there about what's helpful and what's detrimental, so let's set the record straight!

Basically a diet that benefits sleep is a healthy, balanced diet that keeps you nourished and energized. Fresh, whole, organic fruits and vegetables, whole grains, lean proteins and plenty of water are essential. Where possible consume ethically farmed meat and dairy and choose live, raw food to make the majority of your diet plant-based. Avoid heavily processed food that is high in sugar and salt content or high-carbohydrate junk foods.

This can be a vicious circle because when we're sleep deprived we often crave sugary, high fat, high carbohydrate foods. The answer is to work on adopting and integrating a healthy diet over time so that it becomes completely natural to you to

make positive food choices and avoid things that don't promote good sleep.

Drinking water and staying hydrated is also super important, it will keep you focused and alert throughout the day and can balance your energy levels. Being thirsty and dehydrated can leave you feeling sluggish and sleepy and dependent on caffeine or sugar for a quick boost. You don't have to cut out your morning coffee, just make sure your caffeine intake is not happening in the latter half of the day.

Certain foods are particularly guilty of sabotaging your precious shut-eye time. Eating heavy meals late at night can be problematic as your body is busy digesting instead of winding down for sleep. That said, you don't want to go to bed hungry as that can also be distracting and not help you to fall asleep. If you eat a big meal at night try to have it at least four hours before you get into bed so your body has time to digest properly. If you need a nighttime snack, check out my tips on foods to eat right before bedtime.



Do you think about your sleep health as much as your day to day health?

Your diet, exercise routine and stress levels are all affecting the way that you sleep. The best way to create a good foundation for overall long-term health and wellbeing is with balance.

To have optimum sleep health you need a good diet, an active lifestyle and the ability to keep your stress levels down. I find most of this to be intuitive, if you are connected to the health and wellbeing of your mind and body you instinctively gravitate to food, drink and lifestyle practices that are positive for you. Your body knows what it needs at a core level. The majority of us just need a reminder and a nudge in the right direction.

In this booklet I'll share my own sleep-health secrets with you, plus techniques for de-stressing and creating a lifestyle that brings long-lasting benefits through great sleep.

Exercise

Carving out time for regular physical activity is a game changer for healthy sleep. Exercise boosts serotonin and decreases the stress hormone cortisol (not to mention keeps you in shape and increase your heart health, flexibility, mobility, balance etc). It's best to work-out in the morning rather than late at night and to keep it moderate as excessive training can actually disrupt your sleep patterns.

When you don't have much time for gym routines or regular work-out classes, even just a simple brisk walk outside every day can be hugely beneficial to your sleep patterns.

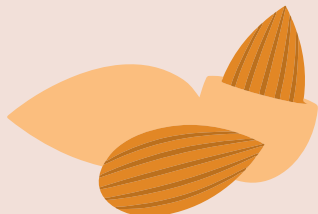


Top Twelve Foods to Eat Before Bedtime

Food Type

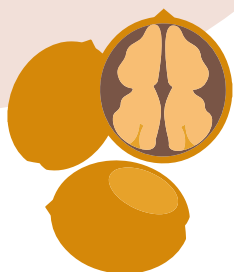
Health Benefits

Almonds



Contain high dose of melatonin (sleep regulating hormone) A 1 oz serving includes 77mg magnesium & 76 mg calcium (promotes muscle relaxation & sleep) High in good fats. Low in sugar and saturated fats.

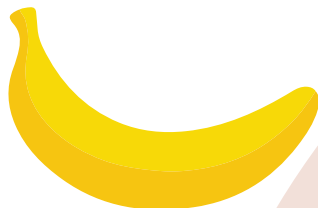
Walnuts



High in melatonin, magnesium, copper, phosphorus and manganese.

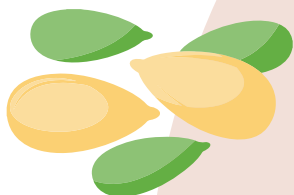
Contain over 19 vitamins and minerals and 2g of fibre in a 10x serving. Rich in the fatty acid ALA that converts to DHA in the body (may increase serotonin)

Bananas



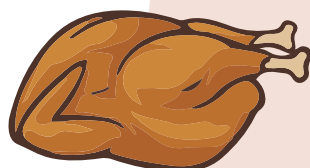
Good source of magnesium and tryptophan (an amino acid that helps increase serotonin) Serotonin can calm and relax you and helps produce melatonin. High in good carbs, fiber and good sugars.

Pumpkin Seeds



Excellent source of magnesium, potassium, calcium, zinc and tryptophan (helpful to increase serotonin) Combine a handful before bed with almonds and walnuts.

Turkey



High in protein (which evidence supports can contribute to sleep quality and promote tiredness). High tryptophan content.

Chamomile Tea

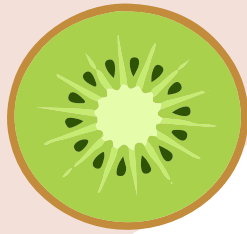


Contains antioxidant apigenin - said to bind to certain receptors in your brain that may help you feel sleepy and relaxed. Also has immune boosting properties and can help with anxiety and depression.

Food Type

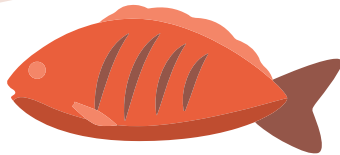
Health Benefits

Kiwi



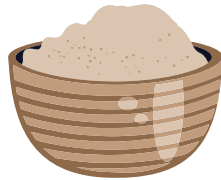
Serotonin content aids sleep. High in Vitamin C and K, folate and potassium. Can help digestion, lower cholesterol and reduce inflammation due to high fiber and carotenoid antioxidants.

Fatty Fish
(salmon, tuna,
trout, mackerel)



High in Omega 3 fatty acids and vitamin D, a combination that can enhance sleep due to producing serotonin.

Oatmeal



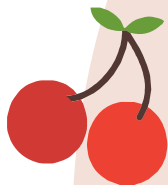
The whole grains trigger insulin production, naturally raising your blood sugar producing a sleepy effect. Rich in melatonin.

Lettuce



Contains a phytonutrient called lactucarium, which is said to relieve pain, aid sleep and increase relaxation.

Cherries
(tart cherries)



High in melatonin, rich source of antioxidants including anthocyanins and flavonols, high in vitamin A and C. Eaten raw or as a juice can help sleep quality.

Sweet Potato



Great source of potassium, magnesium and calcium aiding relaxation for a good night's sleep.

Best Herbal Teas

to drink before bed

Food Type

Lavender



Passion Flower



Lemon Balm



Valerian Root



Magnolia Bark



Chamomile



Health Benefits

Made from the small buds of flowering Lavender, the pleasant aroma and soothing effect can settle nerves and induce calm and relaxation.

Used traditionally to alleviate insomnia, it's an incredible sleep aid.

People have been using this aromatic, citrus herb to improve sleep and reduce anxiety since the Middle Ages.

Valerian root has been shown to increase sleepiness by increasing levels of a neurotransmitter called GABA that helps us sleep.

Used in Chinese medicine to tackle stress, magnolia contains the compound honokiol which has a sedative effect.

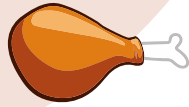
Popular choice Chamomile contains the antioxidant apigenin which can help you to feel relaxed, calm and sleepy.

Top Foods to Avoid

Eating Before Bed

Foods

Fried chicken or fish.



Processed/ smoked meats



Spicy Foods



Coffee/ tea/ energy drinks



Alcohol



Tomato sauces or heavy creamy sauces.



Orange juice



Why to Avoid

Fried foods are harder to digest, swap to grilled, steamed or poached.

Contain high levels of sodium sure to make you dehydrated all night.

Can induce heartburn.

High caffeine content = bad sleep

Although commonly used as a relaxant, prevents your body from entering deep sleep.

Cause acid reflux and heart burn, hard to digest at night.

Acidity can cause heartburn.

Natural Sleep Aids

(to compliment dietary intake)

Always consult a doctor/ health professional before...

Melatonin

A hormone we naturally produce, signals it's time to sleep. Supplements safe to use for short periods of time especially for jet-lag where natural cycle is disrupted.

Magnesium

Has a relaxing effect on our brains and bodies. Important mineral for brain and heart function and health. Insufficient levels linked to insomnia.

Valerian Root

Sleep promoting herb also used to treat symptoms of anxiety, depression and menopause.

Ginkgo Biloba

Shown to reduce stress, enhance relaxation and aid a peaceful sleep.

Theanine

An amino acid with sedative properties that has been shown to help with relaxation.



Aromatherapy

Essential Oils that Promote Sleep

Scents can trigger physical reactions for us that have lasting effects. Our olfactory nerve sends signals to different parts of the brain that are in charge of our emotions, memory and moods as well as our autonomic nervous system.

The ancient complementary practice of aromatherapy uses the curative power of scents from essential oils that have been extracted from plants. These oils balance your mind, body and spirit and have been shown to greatly enhance relaxation, reduce anxiety and stress and soothe you into healthy sleep. They can be diluted in water and rubbed onto the body (certain acupuncture points) or diffused into the air through sprays or candles. I personally love adding oils to a warm bath.

These are my favorite aromatherapy oils to use before bed.

Rose



Reduces stress and promotes rest.

Lavender



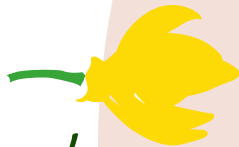
Actually changes brain waves to a calmer state as well as lowering blood pressure, heart rate and calming the nervous system.

Clary Sage



Relaxing aroma, alleviates depression.

Ylang Ylang



Calms the system, lowers blood pressure.

Bergamot



A citrus hybrid that relieves tension.

Jasmine



A sweet, floral scent that promotes excellent sleep and lowers anxiety

Essential Ways to Make Sure you Fall (and Stay) Asleep

Room temperature. As we fall asleep our body temperature changes. Our core temperature falls but our hands and feet increase in temperature. It's therefore important to make sure your room is just the right temperature, somewhere between 60-75 F (15-23 C). You don't want to get too hot as this can cause you to stay awake

Avoid looking at the clock. If you wake up in the middle of the night don't reach for the clock. This can cause anxiety and you might start obsessing about the time, how many hours you have left to sleep and keep you wide awake and suffering from insomnia. I learned too that if you make clock-watching a regular thing your body starts to develop a routine and you can find yourself waking up at a similar time every night. Ideally remove the clocks from your room or put them where you cannot reach for them in the night.

No Long Naps. If you are sleepy during the day it's so tempting to take a nap if possible, but this can be a dangerous habit to fall into. While a 5-15 minute power nap may revitalize you, anything longer can be detrimental to your nighttime sleep quality, especially if you're napping late in the day (after 6pm).

Prioritize your comfort. A good mattress and high quality pillow can make the world of difference to your sleep. Mattresses that are medium-firm are best for muscular comfort and deep rest. A pillow that you feel comfortable on is also crucial, pillows can affect your neck curve, the way you fall asleep and even your temperature. Think about what you wear to bed too, make sure that you are in soft, loose fabrics that promote the ideal body temperature for you.

Find the right position. Are you back, stomach or side kind of sleeper? Research shows that side-sleepers may have the best sleep, although this is totally down to your individual preferences. Make sure that you don't wake up with aches or cramps and experiment with sleeping in different positions to maximize the quality of your rest.

Focus on staying awake. This one is for all those who lie in bed trying to fall asleep and instead remain wide awake. Instead of forcing yourself to sleep, try this paradoxical intention technique whereby you try to stay awake instead. It sounds weird, but actually the stress caused by getting worked up trying to sleep prevents you from relaxing. If you lie awake just allow yourself to be awake, you may find you drift off much easier.

Favorite soothing pre-bed time rituals

Set aside wind-down time. Make sure you have a certain amount of time in which to relax, and get ready for bed without distractions or importantly without electronics. Turn everything off at least 30 minutes before bed. The shortwave, artificial blue light from screens is disruptive to your circadian rhythm. It stimulates you and over time this can have a chronically negative effect.

Listen to relaxing music. Playing some soothing tunes before bed is a great way to create a calm atmosphere for sleep and can also help stop a busy mind from overthinking. I find that the power of music to trigger the right vibes can not be over estimated, it's an instant mood changer.

Take a warm lavender bat. Tried and tested, a good warm, relaxing bath is a sure way to get you in the sleep zone. Adding lavender oil or bubbles will work to calm and soothe both your body and your mind. The hot water helps to prepare you for sleep by raising your body temperature (just don't get over heated).

Visualize/ let your mind wander. Preparing for sleep is a great time to let your imagination loose and take a mental vacation or spend some time imagining yourself already living the dreams you want to manifest. So take a virtual trip to a beach or have fun visualizing yourself in

certain scenarios. Don't put limits on this, I just allow my mind to relax and enjoy the opportunity to day dream and feel happy.

Journaling. I love writing down all the positive things that happened during the day, taking note of the things I am grateful for and expressing my emotions. Research shows that focusing on positive thoughts can downgrade stressful events and help you to relax at bedtime by creating a calm mind and a state of gratitude. Just 5 -15 minutes before bed to write about your day is a wonderful practice to get into.

Read. Let's not underestimate the pleasure of reading the "old fashioned" way i.e turning paper pages not scrolling on an electronic device. Lying in bed with a good book before you fall asleep can promote longer, better quality sleep and also calm your mind before bed. This is one of my favorite things to do before I go to sleep.

Yoga and Meditation. Obviously this is a big one for me! Restorative yoga and meditation are the most essential and overall life-enhancing practices to get into not to mention the huge boost they provide to your sleep health. Yoga encourages healthy breathing and the release of stored tension, relaxing you into a calm physical and mental state. Meditation has been shown to increase melatonin levels and brings your brain to a relaxed state where it's easy to fall asleep.

[Magic Yoga Move](#)

[Yoga Nidra Meditation](#)

Tips for people who find it hard to get out of bed

Don't snooze. Even though it's tempting, that time between hitting snooze (and hitting it again) or getting up doesn't do much to help you feel more rested. You're not actually getting the full sleep cycle needed for restorative sleep in that time, so really it's just wasted minutes that you are not sleeping or making the most of your morning.

Lay things out the night before. If you prep the night before (picking out your outfit, prepping smoothie ingredients or laying out your workout clothes) you will develop a routine that makes for an easy morning. Feeling ready will help you to bounce out of bed and into your day.

Wake up with bright light. Light is a big signal to our bodies to shut down the sleep hormone melatonin and get ready to be awake. If you don't wake up to natural sunlight, turning a bright light on will help your body adjust and be ready for the day.

Visualize your day. If you tend to feel overwhelmed by all the things on your to-do list, it's a great practice to begin by visualizing yourself going through your day successfully getting things done. Spend just 5 minutes before you go to bed visualizing the day to come in the best possible way. Figure out how each task can get done, form a manageable, realistic schedule in your mind and know that you can handle whatever comes your way.

Set a sleep schedule. Get in touch with your circadian rhythm (your body's regulatory system). If you wake up and go to bed at roughly the same time every day you are giving yourself a big helping hand. Your internal clock conforms to this regular schedule and your body learns to adjust to it. Try to make sure that you get 7 -9 hours of sleep a night as this is the optimal duration for adults.

