



Contents

Intro	7
Sleep	9
Can't Go Back To Sleep	11
Sleep is a mental factor	14
Sleeping Meditation	16
Rumi.....	19
Rumi Because I cannot sleep.....	19
Ode 314.....	21
I am part of the load	22
Rabia Basri	23
Dream Fable	23
Attar of Nishapur.....	25
Looking for your own face	25
Kahlil Gibran	26
The Sleep-Walkers	26
The Widow And Her Son Xxi.....	27
The Sun Is Always Shinning We Just Fall Asleep	29
I Like To Sleep Well At Night	30
A Good Night Sleep	32
Children and Sleep	34
Why Is Sleep Important For Children?	35
What Happens When Children Don't Get Enough Sleep?	35
Tips on How To Make Sure Your Child Gets a Full Night's Sleep	36
Sleep Hygiene Tips for Kids	36
Sleep Problems in Children.....	38
Night Terrors and Nightmares	39
Sleep Talking and Sleepwalking.....	39
Snoring and Sleep Apnea.....	40
Restless Legs Syndrome.....	40
About Our Editorial Team	41
Danielle Pacheco, Staff Writer	41
Dr. Nilong Vyas, Pediatrician MD	41

References	41
15 Sources	41
Meditation for Sleep.....	43
What Does Meditation Do for Sleep?	44
How to Meditate	45
Types of Meditation	46
Mindfulness Meditation	46
Guided Meditation	46
Qigong	46
Tai Chi	47
Yoga	47
Yoga Nidra	47
Does Meditation Have Any Risks?	47
Other Benefits of Meditation	48
Are You Meditating or Sleeping? - An Expert Explains The Difference Between Meditation and Sleep .	49
Clearing the system: release of stress and fatigue	50
Differences between sleep and meditation	51
Letting go into meditation for deeper cleansing	52
A Short Meditation for Sleep	54
About Our Editorial Team	54
Jay Summer, Staff Writer	54
Dr. Anis Rehman, Endocrinologist MD	55
Meditation vs Sleep: Notable Similarities and Surprising Differences	56
How Sleep and Meditation Are Similar	56
The Brain In Deep Sleep and Samadhi	57
How Sleep and Meditation Are Different	58
Meditation Can Be More Restful Than Sleep	58
Meditation and Sleep Are Mutually Enhancing	59
Meditation Connects Us With Inner Peace and Joy	59
The Bottom Line	60
When You Need to Catch Up On Sleep, Is Meditation The Answer?	61
Can You Catch Up On Sleep By Meditating?.....	62
We Are Not Sleeping (Nor Meditating) Enough.....	62

Catching Up On Sleep Is Hard To Do	63
Short Term Sleep Loss.....	63
Long Term Sleep Loss	63
Overnight Sleep Loss	64
Meditation For Better Sleep	64
Meditation For... Less Sleep?	65
Sleep vs Meditation: The Benefits.....	66
More guides to improved sleep:	68
Related posts	69
Why Sleep Meditation Works for Kids and How to Try It	70
Meditation can help young children release energy, process concerns, and find comfort at night. Try these simple steps to see if sleep meditation can make bedtime easier for your child—and family!	70
Clear Your Head With Sleep Meditation	74
What Is Sleep Meditation?	75
How to Prepare for a Sleep Meditation	76
1. Breath Connection	76
2. Body Scan.....	77
3. Energy Exchange.....	77
Guided Sleep Meditations and Apps	77
Unstress: 21 Days of Meditation for Relaxation, Calm, and Less Anxiety	77
Tips for Getting a Good Night's Sleep.....	78
How Functional Foods May Improve Sleep and Immune Health	83
BEST FOODS THAT HELP YOU SLEEP	87
15 Best Foods to Eat Before Bed	88
1. Fish.....	88
2. Turkey.....	88
3. Almonds	88
4. Whole Grains	89
5. Warm Milk	89
6. Tart Cherry Juice	89
7. White Rice	90
8. Lettuce	90
9. Bananas.....	90

10. Yogurt.....	91
11. Kiwi	91
12. Chamomile tea.....	91
13. Eggs	92
14. Kale.....	92
15. Barley Grass Powder	92
Other Foods and Drinks that Help You Sleep	93
Foods to Avoid Before Bed	93
Tomato-based sauces	94
High-fat food.....	94
Fried Food	94
High Sodium Food	94
Spicy Food	94
Drinks to Avoid Before Bed.....	94
Coffee.....	94
Alcohol.....	94
Sugary and Energy Drinks	95
Black Tea	95
How Does Your Diet Affect Sleep?	95
Is Eating Before Bed Bad?	96
Conclusion	96
How Foods May Affect Our Sleep	97
How Lack of Sleep Affects Junk Food Cravings.....	101
THE LINK BETWEEN SLEEP LOSS AND CRAVINGS	102
AROMAS ARE MORE ENTICING WHEN WE'RE TIRED	103
THE BOTTOM LINE	103
Does Junk Food Cause Insomnia? Here's What the Science Says.....	104
Why is Eating Junk Food Causing Insomnia All Of a Sudden?	104
The Effect of Junk Food on Gut Microbiota.....	106
Junk Food and Mental Illnesses	108
Junk Food, Obesity, and Sleep	109
Sugar and Insomnia.....	109
Summary: Can Junk Food Cause Sleep Problems?	110

What to Do Before Bed: A Guide to Optimize Your Sleep	111
Reduce Blue Light	111
Drink Less Caffeine	112
Have a Consistent Routine	113
Do you want to do more with less stress?	114
Exercise Regularly	114
Take Time to Relax	115
Put Down Your Phone	116
Be Wary of Long Naps	116
Make Your Bedroom Comfortable	117
Optimize Your Productivity With Better Sleep	118
Final Thoughts	119
When Is the Best Time To Go to Sleep?	120
Does timing matter?	121
How many hours of sleep should you get?	122
Sleep tips.....	123
What's the Best Time to Sleep?	126
Closing	130

Intro

Come with me on this journey. Let's explore the mysteries of going to sleep.

We probably spend 1/3 of our life sleeping.

Most people think that sleeping is a drag. Why do I have to go to bed every night and sleep?

Such is the thinking when we are texting on the freeway of life.

We take the miraculous and make it absolutely mundane.

Humanity spends billions of dollars a year on drugs to try to make them sleep at night. These drugs do nothing except compound the problem.

We have no clue that our lifestyles dictate the kind of sleep that we will have. It will dictate how healthy your mind and body will be.

Do we live in a time where preventative medicine is at the bottom of the barrel in life?

Society believes wholeheartedly that Western medicine is the answer to the world's problems.

We believe a doctor will give us a drug and make us well without changing our lifestyles.

Nobody wants to take responsibility. The United States is a sickness nation, not a wellness nation.

This book will give you some great insights and hopefully practical tips you can use to make you sleep better.

Hopefully, it will also show you what a miracle this human body is. If you take care of it, it will take care of you.

There is a huge battle going on inside of you. What we consider truth is fiction and fiction is truth.

We are so far out of balance with nature that we can't see the forest from the trees.

We think we are so normal. Just take a look around you and see the mess that we have created in this world.

Hopefully, these books will help you in a little way to bring you in balance with your true nature.

Sleep



Many people think that sleep is a waste of time.

If you are a professional football player your sleep is worth more than all the gold in the world.

Some elite athletics are getting 12 hours of sleep. They are taking an hour nap during the day. By doing this they have a huge advantage over their competitors. You see during sleep your body is repairing itself.

A football player places a huge demand on the body.

Personally, I can't even imagine in just one game the kind of trauma that occurs. Each play is super intense.

Proper sleep is the way for the body to recover, heal and overcome any injuries. I would imagine many young players who love to party well into the night. They wake up in the morning with a hangover.

They struggle to get out of bed. Maybe it's game day. Their body and mind are already off-center. They are not 100% ready for the game.

What happens if half the team does this? Good luck on the playing field.

Now imagine the entire team gets plenty of sleep. They take an afternoon nap. The body and mind are rested. The team will do much better on and off the field.

When the body and mind are rested and at ease. It functions more efficiently. One becomes more conscious and aware.

A person's intuition is more enhanced.

Personally, I think the team that has a higher sense of intuition will win the game. A team that goes into the zone when all odds are against them can win the game. The chiefs prove this during the playoffs.

Football players are like warriors. They have better be in tip-top condition during the game.

The mind and body must be in sync. My personal advice is when the game is over don't go out and party.

Go home and get some precious sleep. Party during the daylight hours. Limit your alcohol. That's another subject. Remember you are paid millions of dollars.

You're playing years are extremely limited. Your risk for head injuries is probably higher than any profession. This, unfortunately, is a huge issue for a player that affects you for the rest of your life.

Your young and have a youthful spirit. Learn from the older players who retired. They have great knowledge and lessons to give to you.

Remember you are a drop in the bucket. There is always someone who would love to take your place. I'm just saying take care of your own interests. You know that only you can change for the better.

Proper sleep is the key to your success.

I'm sure many of you will probably roll your eyes and have a smirk on your face. Yet the next time you are struggling on the field just remember this advice.

Science and the art of football are being aligned. The lifestyles days of the sixties and seventies are over.

The game is more intense. Players are bigger and heavier. As you know they can cause huge damage. Apply some practical sense. Learn how to take advantage. Just a 1% advantage can win the game.

Can't Go Back To Sleep

Have you gotten yourself into a pattern where you wake up around 1:00 in the morning and can't go back to sleep? You are wide awake and restless. Well, this is a perfect time to close your eyes and concentrate on your breath.

Just relax and watch the sweetness of your breath. Don't struggle just watch and feel the love flowing through you. You may go back to sleep and then wake up again. Continue watching your breath. The more you do this over time the easier it gets.

When you begin to experience love inside of you try the following. Focus on your breath. Then spend time and focus on each chakra. See chapter 11. Start from the root chakra and work your way to the crown chakra. Take your time. Don't rush.

Imagine this system is always been there and yet we are oblivious to it. Our mentality is if I can't see it I don't believe it. Well, you can see the air or see love but it does exist. This chakra system is a part of our being. It's as real as your physical body. You just can't see it.

You are hardwired to see God. By being aware of these chakras and paying attention to them you are consciously becoming aware of the mind, body, and soul connection.

You can heal yourself over time. You can let go of your emotional baggage. You can slowly change and become in harmony with the universe.

You can become more aware. You can learn how to take charge of your life and learn how to be a proactive human being.

Most of us live our lives like leaves blowing in the wind. We react to each circumstance without being aware. Our subconscious is running the show.

Many people think that sleep is a drag. They wish that they didn't have to sleep. They are oblivious not in synch with nature and the universe. Sleep is a time when the body can get rid of toxins from the day.

Scientists have discovered between 8:00 and 12:00 is the best time for the body to repair itself. Unfortunately, most of us are oblivious to this. Every night while we sleep we tap into the source of life. This is how we recharge ourselves. It's like

we have a battery inside that needs to be recharged every night. Much like our cell phones need to be recharged.

When we wake up from our dreams and can't fall asleep try this. If you don't want to do this then spend time forgiving all those people who have wronged you. Forgive yourself.

While you are doing this try to feel what part of the body this energy is stored in. You see your negative thoughts and emotions are stored in your human body.

We all are carrying boulders inside and we all feel the weight in ourselves. Forgiveness is the key to dropping our emotional baggage.

By concentrating on your chakras over time you release emotional baggage from the specific chakra you are focusing on.

This path is meant to be fun and full of adventures. As Bugs Bunny once said don't take life so seriously because you will never get out of it alive.

These are all tools that you can use daily. There are hundreds of tools that you can use to change for the better.

Most people don't like to change. We have been taught since birth that change is not good. We have been taught to fear change. We don't want to upset the apple cart.

Even when we live our lives in misery we don't want to change for the better. Our world has made us complacent and feel numb. Take a look at our media. It only projects the negative not the positive.

That is slowly beginning to change. Most broadcast news channels now present a small positive segment at the end of the newscast. Some have it every day while others might have it on a Friday.

If you just spent a little time each day and used these tools your life will change for the better. You are the company that you keep. If you just blow this off and say I don't need to change.

I'm fine with yourself that your free will and free choice. Nobody is going to judge you.

All I'm saying is that you are hardwired to discover your true nature. You are the universe. You just don't know it.

Sleep is a mental factor



1)

Sleep is a mental factor that is the result of mental heaviness or mental dullness, makes the mind unclear, and is responsible for dissolving the sense consciousnesses (into the subtler mind).

It has the function of letting the apprehension of the object of the conscious mind degenerate and causing a loss of conscious physical activity. When the body and mind are exhausted and in need of refreshment, sleepiness pulls the sense consciousnesses and the coarse mental consciousness into the darkness of deep sleep, i.e. a state in which no dreaming occurs.

As the force of sleep becomes lighter dreams are then experienced due to the ripening of imprints left on the mind during the waking state. Sleep is a changeable mental factor because it can be influenced by our behavior.

If we spend the day involved in wholesome activities and, in particular, generate strong positive thoughts before going to sleep, this will cause the sleep itself to be wholesome and restful.

If, on the other hand, our minds are filled with hatred and cravings when we go to sleep, the quality of sleep will likewise be unwholesome and disturbed.

Sleepin

Sleeping Meditation

Many people think that sleep is a drag. They wish that they didn't have to go to sleep. Yet sleep is an incredible doorway to the quantum field. Sleep is a doorway to finding our true nature.

It's amazing every night when we truly fall asleep we go back to the quantum field yet we aren't aware of it. When we wake up in the morning our bodies are recharged.

How would you like when you are sleeping to have your awareness in the quantum field and be conscious at the same time?

As I have said many times the more attention you focus on the power behind your breath at some point the power of your breath focus back on you. In the beginning, you meditate on God. At some point, God starts to meditate on you.

Sleeping meditation allows you in the comfort of your bed to be aware of the quantum field. There is an infinite source of kindness that exists inside of you.

Each one of us is costumed and designed by the quantum field. When you go to sleep focus on your breath. Over time a door opens within and the power of love will fill you up.

You start to enter into the quantum field. This is your true nature. Just dwell in this love. There is never a point in time where you can't go deeper. This journey is infinite.

Many times when I wake up early in the morning I concentrate on each of my chakras. I do the chakra meditation. Imagine being in a state of heaven and moving through each chakra.

The whole mind, body, and soul connection is being healed. The brain is being washed by waves of love. One resides in a field of divine light and a force of infinite love.

Wow, words truly can't describe that experience. This experience exists inside of you. The key lies inside of you. Only by your will can you open the door. As I said many times before signpost of God is all around you both inside and outside of you.

When one truly loves to engage in sleeping meditation one truly begins to enjoy life to its fullest. One wakes up in the morning and rejoices on being alive. One is truly grateful.

I love to meditate upon waking up and truly love to be aware of the quantum field. One put's his dreams into reality.

We slowly learn how to not react to the world around us. Most of humanity is living in the winds of the hurricane.

A wise person lives in the center of the hurricane. Yes, he will stumble and fall. When he does one sees that at this point one is in the hurricane winds of the mind.

This person will then focus on his breath and in due time be in the center of the hurricane.

So when you go to bed at night here are some helpful suggestions. Bless the day that was given to you. It may be in a form of a prayer or simple grateful thoughts in your mind. Look over your interaction with the people with that you were connected to. Learn from your mistakes.

Look at the same tapes that were being played over and over in your life. Be conscious of them. Only when you are aware of your actions can you truly change for the better.

You can learn to rewire the actions that cause you to get angry into a state of love, compassion, and kindness. When you realize that by getting angry you are drinking your poison literally.

Learn to truly appreciate and have gratitude towards sleep. Many times when I'm about ready to come down with a cold my body tells me to go to bed an hour earlier.

Consequently, in the morning my body healed itself. Sleep is your best friend. He helps maintain and recalibrate your mind, body, and soul connection.

Your dreams are talking to you. They give you helpful insights and advice. They also give you warnings if you are about to walk off the cliff of life. Your dreams help guide you on this journey in life.

Unfortunately, most of us see them as a waste of time. We place no value on them

I think we probably get less than one percent on the importance of sleep and its true value. Our daily lives are so driven. Most of the time we are living from tapes from the past.

We don't think outside of the box. What a paradox that signposts are all around us yet we don't have the eyes to see them.

Many people try to go asleep yet they can't. Their mind and body are so stressed out that they can't sleep. Millions of people all around the world have this problem.

Millions take drugs so they can go asleep. Yet they will go asleep taking these drugs yet they have a huge side effect.

All it takes is small baby steps to learn how to connect to the quantum field. Ponder this over. You are a piece of the puzzle.

Commented [RF1]:

Commented [RF2R1]:

Commented [RF3R1]:

Rumi

Rumi Because I cannot sleep



Because I cannot sleep
I make music at night.
I am troubled by the one
whose face e has the color of spring flowers.
I have neither sleep nor patience,
neither a good reputation nor a disgrace.
A thousand robes of wisdom are gone.
All my good manners have moved a thousand miles away.
The heart and the mind are left angry with each other.
The starts and the moon are envious of each other.
Because of this alienation the physical universe
is getting tighter and tighter.
The moon says, "How long will I remain
suspended without a sun?"
Without Love's jewel inside of me,
let the bazaar of my existence be destroyed stone by stone.
O Love, You who have been called by a thousand names,
You who know how to pour the wine
into the chalice of the body,
You who give culture to a thousand cultures,
You who are faceless but have a thousand faces,
O Love, You who shape the faces
of Turks, Europeans, and Zanzibaris,
give me a glass from Your bottle,
or a handful of bheng from Your Branch.
Remove the cork once more.
Then we'll see a thousand chiefs prostrate themselves,

and a circle of ecstatic troubadours will play.
Then the addict will be a breed of craving.
and will be resurrected,
and stand in awe till Judgement Day.

Ode 314

Need audio



Those who don't feel this Love
pulling them like a river,
those who don't drink dawn
like a cup of spring water
or take in sunset like supper,
those who don't want to change,

let them sleep.

This Love is beyond the study of theology,
that old trickery and hypocrisy.
I you want to improve your mind that way,

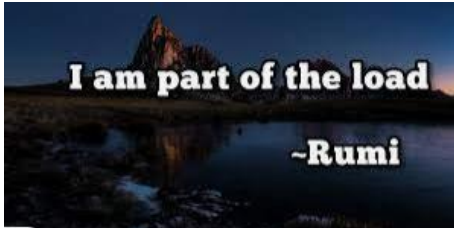
sleep on.

I've given up on my brain.
I've torn the cloth to shreds
and thrown it away.

If you're not completely naked,
wrap your beautiful robe of words
around you,

and sleep.

I am part of the load



I am part of the load
Not rightly balanced
I drop off in the grass,
like the old Cave-sleepers, to browse
wherever I fall.

For hundreds of thousands of years, I have been dust-grains
floating and flying in the will of the air,
often forgetting ever being
in that state, but in sleep
I migrate back. I spring loose
from the four-branched, time-and-space cross,
this waiting room.

I walk into a huge pasture
I nurse the milk of millennia

Everyone does this in different ways.
Knowing that conscious decision
and personal memory
are much too small a place to live,
every human being streams at night
into the loving nowhere, or during the day,
in some absorbing work.

Rabia Basri
Dream Fable



I saw myself in a wide green garden, more beautiful than I could begin to understand. In this garden was a young girl. I said to her, "How wonderful this place is!"

"Would you like to see a place even more wonderful than this?" she asked.

"Oh yes," I answered. Then taking me by the hand, she led me on until we came to a magnificent palace, like nothing that was ever seen by human eyes. The young girl knocked on the door, and someone opened it. Immediately both of us were flooded with light.

Only Allah knows the inner meaning of the maidens we saw living there. Each one carried in her hand a serving-tray filled with light. The young girl asked the maidens where they were going, and they answered her, "We are looking for someone who was drowned in the sea, and so became a martyr. She never slept at night, not one wink! We are going to rub funeral spices on her body."

"Then rub some on my friend here," the young girl said.

"Once upon a time," said the maidens, "part of this spice and the fragrance of it clung to her body -- but then she shied away."

Quickly the young girl let go of my hand, turned, and said to me:

"Your prayers are your light;
Your devotion is your strength;
Sleep is the enemy of both.
Your life is the only opportunity that life can give you.
If you ignore it, if you waste it,
You will only turn to dust."

Then the young girl disappeared.

Attar of Nishapur

Looking for your own face

Need audio



Your face is neither infinite nor ephemeral.
You can never see your own face,
only a reflection, not the face itself.

So you sigh in front of mirrors
and cloud the surface.

It's better to keep your breath cold.
Hold it, like a diver does in the ocean.
One slight movement, the mirror-image goes.

Don't be dead or asleep or awake.
Don't be anything.

What you most want,
what you travel around wishing to find,
lose yourself as lovers lose themselves,
and you'll be that.

.

Kahlil Gibran

The Sleep-Walkers



In the town where I was born lived a woman and her daughter, who walked in their sleep.

One night, while silence enfolded the world, the woman and her daughter, walking, yet asleep, met in their mist-veiled garden.

And the mother spoke, and she said: 'At last, at last, my enemy! You by whom my youth was destroyed--who have built up your life upon the ruins of mine! Would I could kill you!'

And the daughter spoke, and she said: 'O hateful woman, selfish and old! Who stand between my freer self and me! Who would have my life an echo of your own faded life! Would you were dead!'

At that moment a cock crew, and both women awoke. The mother said gently, 'Is that you, darling?' And the daughter answered gently, 'Yes, dear.'

The Widow And Her Son Xxi



Need audio

Night fell over North Lebanon and snow was covering the villages surrounded by the Kadeesha Valley, giving the fields and prairies the appearance of a great sheet of parchment upon which the furious Nature was recording her many deeds. Men came home from the streets while silence engulfed the night.

In a lone house near those villages lived a woman who sat by her fireside spinning wool, and at her side was her only child, staring now at the fire and then at his mother.

A terrible roar of thunder shook the house and the little boy shook with fright. He threw his arms about his mother, seeking protection from Nature in her affection. She took him to her bosom and kissed him; then she sat him on her lap and said, "Do not fear, my son, for Nature is but comparing her great power to man's weakness. There is a Supreme Being beyond the falling snow and the heavy clouds and the blowing wind, and He knows the needs of the earth, for He made it; and He looks upon the weak with merciful eyes.

"Be brave, my boy. Nature smiles in Spring and laughs in Summer and yawns in Autumn, but now she is weeping; and with her tears she waters life, hidden under the earth.

"Sleep, my dear child; your father is viewing us from Eternity. The snow and thunder bring us closer to him at this time.

"Sleep, my beloved, for this white blanket which makes us cold, keeps the seeds warm, and these war-like things will produce beautiful flowers when Nisan

comes.

"Thus, my child, man cannot reap love until after sad and revealing separation, and bitter patience, and desperate hardship. Sleep, my little boy; sweet dreams will find your soul who is unafraid of the terrible darkness of night and the biting frost."

The little boy looked upon his mother with sleep-laden eyes and said, "Mother, my eyes are heavy, but I cannot go to bed without saying my prayer."

The woman looked at his angelic face, her vision blurred by misted eyes, and said, "Repeat with me, my boy - 'God, have mercy on the poor and protect them from the winter; warm their thin-clad bodies with Thy merciful hands; look upon the orphans who are sleeping in wretched houses, suffering from hunger and cold. Hear, oh Lord, the call of widows who are helpless and shivering with fear for their young. Open, oh Lord, the hearts of all humans, that they may see the misery of the weak. Have mercy upon the sufferers who knock on doors, and lead the wayfarers into warm places. Watch, oh Lord, over the little birds and protect the trees and fields from the anger of the storm; for Thou art merciful and full of love.'"

As Slumber captured the boy's spirit, his mother placed him in the bed and kissed his eyes with quivering lips. Then she went back and sat by the hearth, spinning the wool to make him raiment.

The Sun Is Always Shinning We Just Fall Asleep

The sun is always shining we just fall asleep

I Like To Sleep Well At Night

Maybe man actions should be dictated by his sleep.

If a man thought, will this action allow me to sleep well at night?

If it does then follow it.

If the action will lead to you being restless at night, I would definitely think more
before I act.

If the action would lead to a nightmare, don't do it.

Our sleep is a reflection of our life.

Remember the wise man likes a good night's sleep.

Therefore our life will be content.

A Good Night Sleep



Many people think that sleep is a waste of time. To me, that's cloudy thinking.

That is really off the mark. The word sin means to miss the target. In my eyes not understanding why we need a good night's sleep is to miss the target.

I try to lead my life where after a hard day's work I can put my head on the pillow and have no worries whatsoever. Mind you I don't do this all the time but I would say overall I accomplish it.

Did you know that every night each one of us returns to the quantum field? This is how the body recharges our batteries in life.

This is where the mind and body let go of all the stress we encountered throughout the day. Mind you there is a short window. Many scientists say between the hours of 8:00 to 12:00 is the doorway.

This is the time the body repairs itself and lets go of the stress of the day. Unfortunately, many people aren't aware of this. For many people, the stress never gets released. It gets compounded with interest. No wonder our medical system is such an array.

Many people have a hard time falling asleep. So many people take drugs to fall asleep. Unfortunately, the quality of sleep is different. Many people drink alcohol to go to sleep.

We are still missing the bullseye. Look I'm not saying don't do this. I'm saying try to refine your sleep patterns. Try to be more aware. Try to be more conscious. Let sleep be your friend which it is.

Your mind and body deserve to have a good night's sleep. I can almost guarantee you that when the body and mind don't get proper sleep both of them will get quite angry. So many people have the facets of adrenaline flowing constantly. Proper sleep will help you turn off the facet.

Mankind needs to learn about harmony. When I was young I studied the Tao. To be honest I truly didn't understand it. It was all about being in harmony. The older I get I truly embrace the Tao. I understand the importance of being in harmony in all aspects of my life.

Last week I officially retired. Well, I have another job opportunity which I'm pursuing for six months. Anyway, I still feel young at heart. I love to exercise. I love to meditate. I love my afternoon nap.

Recently I read an article that many world-class athletics are taking a one to two-hour nap a day. They discovered the mind and body heal a lot faster. Injuries are reduced significantly. The mind and body once rested can perform at a much higher level.

Scientists are discovering what our Grandparents knew all along. A nap during the day helps to balance our everyday life. When I was young my grandparents did that. I thought it was quite odd. Now I completely understand.

So what am I saying? Learn to be aware of your mind, body, and soul. Listen to your body. Your body is talking to you. We are just paying attention to the world around us. This is how we were brought up. Mind you it takes some patience.

Learn how to become friends with your mind. Slow down. Learn how to be aware of the silence inside of you. Take time every day to be in silence. Focus on your breath.

Read what modern-day scientists are discovering. Remember what you consider out of the box becomes mainstream years later. During the early seventies, I learned about Yoga and meditation.

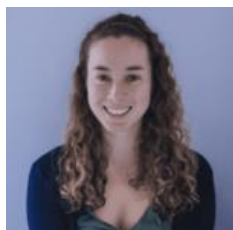
It was completely outside of the box. Currently, it exists everywhere. Remember it takes time for new ideas to come into the mainstream.

I could go on and on about the importance of sleep. Ponder this over. Some hidden jewels are waiting for you to discover.

Children and Sleep

¹An introduction to the importance of sleep in children and how to help them sleep better

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Fact-Checked

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Sleep is an essential building block for your child's mental and physical health. But if you're finding it impossible to help your toddler sleep, you're not alone. The American

¹ <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/children-and-sleep>

Academy of Pediatrics estimates that sleep problems affect 25 to 50 percent of children and 40 percent of adolescents.

Understanding their sleep needs is the first step towards providing better sleep for your children. Through a combination of sleep hygiene, age-appropriate routines, and close attention to any sleep disorders, you can help your child get the rest they need to grow up strong and healthy.

Why Is Sleep Important For Children?

Sleep plays a crucial role in the development of young minds. In addition to having a direct effect on happiness, research shows that sleep impacts alertness and attention, cognitive performance, mood, resiliency, vocabulary acquisition, and learning and memory. In toddlers, napping appears to be necessary for memory consolidation, executive attention, and motor skill development. Sleep also has important effects on growth, especially in early infancy [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#).

What Happens When Children Don't Get Enough Sleep?

As every parent knows, a child that's short on sleep can swing between being grumpy and hyperactive, with effects that can mimic ADHD [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#). Sleepiness can also affect your child's ability to pay attention, with ramifications for their performance in school. Even minimal sleep restriction can have effects on your child's day-to-day life.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), a quarter of children under the age of 5 don't get adequate sleep. This is worrying because poor sleep in early childhood has been linked to allergic rhinitis [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#) and problems with the immune system, as well as anxiety and depression [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#). There is also emerging evidence that poor sleep in childhood may carry future cardiovascular risks in the form of obesity, diabetes [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#), and high blood pressure.

In adolescents, inadequate sleep can have long-term effects on academic performance and mental health [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech

InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#). The American Medical Association, the US Department of Health and Human Services, and the American Academy of Pediatrics consider chronic sleep loss in adolescents to be a public health problem. It is a risk factor for substance abuse and mental health problems, as well as more immediate problems such as car crashes and sports injuries.

Tips on How To Make Sure Your Child Gets a Full Night's Sleep

[Sleep needs change](#) as your child grows older, but whether you're dealing with a 2-year-old toddler or a stubborn teenager, research shows that a consistent bedtime routine [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#) is helpful for making sure your child gets enough sleep. Whatever activities you choose, try to do the same ones every day in the same order so your child knows what to expect.

A typical bedtime routine might include:

- Turning off computers, TV screens, video games, and other [bright lights](#)
- Putting on pajamas and brushing teeth
- Reading a light book, singing a lullaby, or taking a bath
- Picking a stuffed animal or security blanket for the night for toddlers

The best time to put your child to bed is when they're sleepy, not when they're already asleep. This helps them learn how to fall asleep on their own. If preschool children wake up in the middle of the night, walk them back to their bed. It's best not to let infants sleep in your bed, as co-sleeping increases the risk of [sudden infant death syndrome](#).

Sleep Hygiene Tips for Kids

Daytime habits also affect sleep. You can promote restful slumber in your children by following basic [sleep hygiene rules](#):

- Arranging a balanced schedule with interspersed periods of rest and play
- Keeping a regular bedtime
- Making the bedroom, and especially the [mattress](#), a no-screen zone, even during the day [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#)
- Providing a [healthy diet](#)
- Setting the thermostat to a slightly [cooler temperature](#)
- Using dark curtains to block out light, or a nightlight if they're scared of the dark

- Keeping the bedroom quiet, or using a white noise machine to mask outside sounds
- Avoiding caffeine, large meals, and sugary treats before bedtime, opting for a healthy bedtime snack if necessary

It's important to give your child regular exercise, but don't fall into the trap of exhausting your child to have them sleep better at night. More often than not, this will make them overtired and actually make it harder to fall asleep. Learn to recognize the special level of hyper that means your toddler is too tired, so you can put them to bed before things turn sour.

Sometimes, a bedtime routine is easier said than done. For two-parent households or siblings who share a room, bedtime may require extra logistics.

Sleep Tips for Kids

Babies	Toddlers	Adolescents	Teens
			
Try soothing your baby without picking them up. Leave the room quietly when they are settled.	Try giving your toddler control over little parts of the bedtime routine, like picking out pajamas.	Designate a space outside of the bedroom for homework, play, or electronic device usage.	Setting a good example of healthy sleep routines can encourage a teen to follow suit.

Sleep tips for babies: Because they have yet to develop a [circadian rhythm](#), very young babies rarely sleep through the night, and that's ok [Trusted Source](#) National Library of Medicine, Biotech Information The National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information. [View Source](#). If they don't fall back asleep naturally, try soothing them by talking or with touch, without picking them up. If they continue to cry, they may be

hungry or need their diaper changed. Quickly and quietly fix the problem, using only a nightlight if possible, and calmly leave the room.

Sleep tips for toddlers: Young toddlers have a sleep schedule supplemented by two naps a day. Toddler sleep problems are compounded by separation anxiety and a fear of missing out, which translates to stalling techniques and stubbornness at bedtime. You can cut down on these complaints by giving them control over minor choices like which pajamas to wear or which book to read. Try to be patient, firm, yet loving because power struggles are likely to elicit a stronger response from them.

Sleep tips for school kids: Between academic, social, and extracurricular obligations, school-age children often have busy schedules that can make it difficult to get a good night's sleep. Wherever possible, try to follow a consistent schedule and a wind-down period before bed. To strengthen the association between the bedroom and sleep, have them do homework or other activities in another room where possible.

Sleep tips for teenagers: Teenagers are programmed to have a later circadian rhythm which can create a problem with school start times. You can help your teenager by acknowledging the increased demands on their time and working together to find a healthy sleep schedule that works with their lifestyle. Teenagers appear to imitate their parents [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#) to a certain extent when it comes to sleeping, so one of the best things you can do to help them develop a healthy sleep pattern is to [keep one yourself](#).

The morning is important, too. Though it's tempting to let your kids sleep in on the weekends, this can disrupt their sleep schedule and make it harder to wake up during the week. Try not to overschedule extracurricular activities if you notice these having a detrimental effect on their sleep time.

If you're practicing healthy sleep hygiene and your child is still feeling sleepy or having trouble falling asleep or staying asleep at night, it might be time to visit a doctor to see if they have a sleep condition. You can also ask their teacher to keep you updated on their attention levels. Difficulty concentrating, hyperactive behavior, or learning problems may indicate they are not getting proper sleep.

Sleep Problems in Children

Issues that might seem minor to us are often very significant [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#) to a child, so events like a new sibling, teething, an illness, a different place, a new caregiver, a change in schedule, or minor complaints like allergies, colds, and ear infections can all take their toll on your child's sleep.

In addition to these common problems, as many as 50 percent [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#) of children suffer from sleep disorders at some point. Sleep disorders are intricately intertwined with mental and physical health issues, with one exacerbating the other in a cycle that can be hard to break. Additionally, some sleep disorders are not evident to the sleeper, or they may mirror other conditions such as epilepsy, making them difficult to diagnose [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#).

Some of the most common sleep disorders in children are night terrors and nightmares, sleep apnea, sleep talking and sleepwalking, snoring, and restless leg syndrome.

Night Terrors and Nightmares

[Nightmares](#) can be frightening for toddlers, who have a harder time distinguishing what's real and what's not. Children often wake up from nightmares, which usually occur during REM sleep. If this happens, offer them reassurance and gently put them back to sleep.

[Night terrors](#), otherwise known as sleep terrors, are a [parasomnia](#) that occurs early in the night during non-REM sleep in about one-third of children [Trusted Source](#)National Library of Medicine, Biotech InformationThe National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information.[View Source](#). Your child may scream and bolt upright during a night terror, but they won't usually wake up or remember the incident in the morning. The best thing you can do is make sure your child is safe, trying to keep them in bed if possible. There's no need to wake them up or worry if your child experiences the occasional night terror, but if they become very frequent or if they're causing daytime sleepiness, they're worth mentioning to your pediatrician.

Sleep Talking and Sleepwalking

[Sleep talking](#) is a relatively common parasomnia involving vocalizations during sleep. Sleep talking appears to occur more frequently during light sleep, so proper sleep hygiene may help reduce episodes. While harmless on its own, sleep talking may disturb other people in the bedroom. It is sometimes connected to other sleep disorders such as nightmares or sleepwalking.

Research suggests that 1 in 3 children will [sleepwalk](#) before the age of 13, with most episodes occurring in the pre-teen years. As with sleep talkers, sleepwalkers are not aware of their surroundings and usually have no recollection of their activity afterward. In addition to daytime sleepiness, sleepwalking can have serious consequences depending on the person's actions. If your child sleepwalks, it's a good idea to safety-

proof their bedroom and install an alarm. Waking someone up about half an hour before their regular sleepwalking episode occurs has proven useful.

Snoring and Sleep Apnea

Just as with adults, it's normal for children to snore occasionally. [Snoring in children](#) may be caused by swollen tonsils or adenoids, allergies, obesity, secondhand smoke, or other factors. However, if you notice your child snoring excessively, or displaying pauses in breathing followed by gasps, they may have sleep apnea.

Children with [sleep apnea](#) suffer from disrupted breathing which prompts them to wake up multiple times during the night, often without them realizing. The first clue that something is wrong may be when you notice your child displaying the hallmark signs of sleep deprivation, such as daytime sleepiness, difficulty concentrating, and hyperactivity. Frequent snoring and sleep apnea can both have ill effects on your child's health and cause disruptions to other members of the family. Talk to your pediatrician about ways to reduce symptoms.

Restless Legs Syndrome

Characterized by an irrepressible urge to move the legs, restless legs syndrome in children [Trusted Source](#) Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation The Restless Legs Syndrome Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) agency that is dedicated to improving the lives of men, women, and children who live with this often-devastating disease. [View Source](#) can be difficult to identify. You may think your child is simply fidgeting or suffering from growing pains. Treatment of nighttime restless leg syndrome in children includes proper sleep hygiene and stretching before bed. Iron supplements have proven useful in treating adults, but research is still being conducted into the safety and efficacy of iron supplements for children.

If you think your child may be suffering from one of these sleep disorders, keep track of the symptoms in a sleep diary, and talk to your pediatrician. Establishing good sleep hygiene habits and eliminating other barriers to proper sleep is the first line of defense in treating many of these conditions.

Related News

- [Three-Year-Olds Born Preterm and Full Term Had Similar Sleep Patterns](#)
January 20, 2023 – A study of preschool-age children born very preterm and full term found that both groups had similar sleep quantity and quality.
- [Parents Have Unmet Needs in Managing Sleep Issues in Children With Epilepsy](#)
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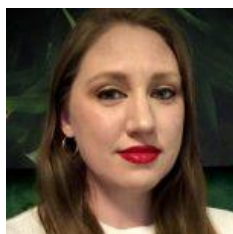
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Meditation for Sleep

UPDATED DECEMBER 16, 2022



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²Many people know the feeling of being unable to sleep due to stress. Once sleep problems begin, they can also trigger anxiety around the idea of bedtime, making it even more difficult to fall asleep. Meditation is one technique that people can use to [relieve stress at bedtime](#) and fall asleep more easily.

² <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/meditation-for-sleep>

Meditation has a long history, particularly in Eastern cultures, where it was often used in the context of spirituality or religion. [Trusted Source](#) Merck Manual First published in 1899 as a small reference book for physicians and pharmacists, the Manual grew in size and scope to become one of the most widely used comprehensive medical resources for professionals and consumers. [View Source](#). In Western medicine, meditation has been studied for several decades with evidence suggesting that it might bring about relaxation and ease stress. Research also suggests that meditation can help with pain and sleep disturbances.

We discuss how meditation works, different types of meditation, and how to use meditation for sleep.

What Does Meditation Do for Sleep?

Meditation is considered a type of mind-body therapy. [Trusted Source](#) National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) NCCIH funds and conducts research to help answer important scientific and public health questions about complementary health approaches. [View Source](#), because meditation techniques often combine mental work with physical aspects such as deep breathing. By targeting both anxious thoughts and physical stress symptoms, [sleep meditation](#) aims to bring about overall relaxation that helps prepare the body for sleep.

On a mental level, meditation techniques are intended to promote a more relaxed response to a person's stressful thoughts and feelings. Meditation styles often incorporate the idea of mindfulness. [Trusted Source](#) National Library of Medicine, Biotech Information The National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information. [View Source](#), or a focus on the present moment with an open, non-judgmental mindset. Meditation may also incorporate concentrating on a repeated phrase, a visual image, a sound, or a sensation, such as breathing, to help reduce distractions.

Meditation is also designed to trigger a physical relaxation response that counteracts the stress response. The stress response, or fight-or-flight response, involves sweating, a rapid heart rate, faster breathing, tense muscles, and increased blood pressure, which are not conducive to sleep. The relaxation response calms breathing, reduces heart rate and blood pressure, and slows brain waves.

Mindfulness and meditation likely help people sleep via several different pathways.

- **Slowed breathing:** Deep breathing using the diaphragm, a muscle below the lungs, is a cornerstone of many meditation practices. The focus on calm, deep breathing appears to be one of the principal pathways by which meditation reduces anxiety. [Trusted Source](#) UpToDate More than 2 million healthcare providers around the world choose UpToDate to help make appropriate care decisions and drive better health outcomes. UpToDate delivers evidence-based clinical decision support that is clear, actionable, and rich with real-world insights. [View Source](#).

- Calmed stress pathways: Like other relaxation techniques, meditation can help lower heart rate and blood pressure. Some data suggests that meditation reduces activation of stress pathways in the brain, as well as levels of stress hormones.
- Improved mental outlook: Concentrating on the present moment during meditation may help a person anxiously think about the past or future less often and soften their reactions to difficult experiences.
- Better managed pain: Some studies have found that meditation can reduce pain, while others have not. Even when meditation does not reduce a person's physical pain, it may help make the pain more bearable. This effect may be useful for people who have trouble sleeping due to chronic [pain](#).

Although more research is needed, evidence suggests that mindfulness meditation may improve [sleep quality](#) on a level similar to [exercise](#) or [cognitive behavioral therapy](#).

Up to one year after participating in a meditation program, many participants still experience better sleep quality. Researchers believe this may be due to changes to connections in the brain, changes to the way a person moves through sleep stages, and the practice of mental techniques that decrease sleep-disrupting thoughts.

To maximize potential benefits, it may help to use meditation alongside other [healthy sleep habits](#), such as keeping regular bedtimes and keeping the [sleep environment](#) cool, dark, and quiet.

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How to Meditate

There are many types of meditation, and each has its own specific practices. However, most meditation styles have a few concepts in common.

- Concentration: Meditation usually asks a person to focus on a certain object, a repeated phrase, or their breathing. While they focus, they remain receptive to any thoughts that may crop up, but do their best to gently steer their attention back to the object of focus in a non-judgmental manner.
- Quiet environment: Reducing outside distractions can help a person who is meditating enter into a calm state of mind.
- Deep breathing: Breathing in a calm, controlled manner during meditation can promote relaxation. People are usually instructed to concentrate on using the diaphragm muscles that are located below the lungs instead of using the chest muscles.
- Comfortable position: Meditation can be practiced while sitting, but it can also be performed while standing, walking, lying down, or adopting specific postures and movements.

Types of Meditation

People may use a variety of meditation styles to help them sleep, including mindfulness meditation, guided meditation, qigong, tai chi, and yoga.

Meditation for anxiety and sleep is often combined with other [relaxation techniques](#), such as deep breathing or progressive muscle relaxation.

Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness practices involve concentrating on the present, and they allow a person to experience emotions and thoughts without judgment. Like diaphragmatic breathing and progressive muscle relaxation, mindfulness may help a person relax at bedtime and reduce symptoms of insomnia.

Guided Meditation

In guided meditation, a person may listen to an audio recording [Trusted Source](#) Department of Veteran Affairs (VA)/Department of Defence (DoD) Clinical Practice Guidelines The VA, in collaboration with the DoD and other leading professional organizations, has been developing clinical practice guidelines since the early 1990s. In 2010 the Institute of Medicine identified VA/DoD as leaders in clinical practice guideline development. [View Source](#) that helps direct their thoughts as they meditate. For example, a guided meditation track may tell the person how to adjust their breathing, how to work through their thoughts, or how to interpret physical sensations.

Guided imagery is another form of guided meditation that leads a person on a visual journey to help elicit relaxation. Guided imagery can incorporate explicit instructions, such as asking a person to imagine they are walking along a tropical beach and encouraging them to use all five senses to experience the scene. Alternatively, guided imagery can be more open-ended, such as by instructing a person to imagine they are in their favorite place.

Several studies have found that guided meditation programs may help improve sleep [Trusted Source](#) National Library of Medicine, Biotech Information The National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information. [View Source](#).

Qigong

Qigong is a traditional Chinese medicine technique that uses mental focus, slow movements, and deep breathing [Trusted Source](#) National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NICCH) NCCIH funds and conducts research to help answer important scientific and public health questions about complementary health approaches. [View Source](#) to improve energy flow within the body.

Scientific evidence for the benefits of qigong is still in the early stages, with researchers examining if qigong techniques could help manage pain, improve quality of life, decrease stress and depression, or improve sleep quality.

Tai Chi

Tai chi is a type of meditation that involves constant, gentle movement. Although tai chi was originally developed as a martial art, it is used as a form of qigong currently, to improve health and wellness. People who practice tai chi adopt a series of postures in a slow, relaxed manner while concentrating on breathing deeply and letting go of distracting thoughts.

Yoga

[Yoga](#) commonly incorporates mindfulness meditation, diaphragmatic breathing, and stretching-based poses. The exact techniques vary depending on the type of yoga. A yoga teacher can suggest appropriate poses based on a person's experience level, physical capabilities, and needs.

There are few high-quality studies on the benefits of yoga, though research suggests yoga might be helpful for reducing stress, improving sleep quality, and managing insomnia related to stress or chronic health conditions.

Yoga Nidra

Also known as yogic sleep or psychic sleep, yoga nidra is a type of yoga said to induce a sleep-like state. [Trusted Source](#) National Library of Medicine, Biotech Information The National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information. [View Source](#). This state may imitate the brain waves that occur while a person sleeps, even moving through different sleep stages, while allowing the person to retain some level of consciousness. Yoga nidra can incorporate chanting, focus on breathing, and awareness of different body parts.

Research on yoga nidra for sleep is still in the early stages, but studies suggest it may improve sleep quality. [Trusted Source](#) National Library of Medicine, Biotech Information The National Center for Biotechnology Information advances science and health by providing access to biomedical and genomic information. [View Source](#) and reduce time spent awake in bed.

Does Meditation Have Any Risks?

Although meditation for sleep does not pose risks for most people, a small percentage of people may experience mental discomfort, particularly those with pre-existing mental health conditions, addiction, or a history of trauma. Possible risks associated with meditation include:

- Poorer sleep quality
- Muscle soreness
- Disorientation or confusion
- Negative feelings such as sadness, anxiety, or anger
- Heightened awareness of fears or one's own negative qualities
- Intrusive thoughts
- Fear of losing control

People who have experienced anxiety or panic disorder, especially those who have hyperventilated in the past, should be careful when trying deep breathing. In some cases, relaxation techniques can trigger anxiety or panic attacks.

With movement-based meditation practices, like yoga, some people, particularly older adults or those with other health conditions, may sustain light injuries [Trusted Source](#) National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NICCH) NCCIH funds and conducts research to help answer important scientific and public health questions about complementary health approaches. [View Source](#) such as strains or sprains. Very rarely, a person may sustain a more serious injury. Certain types of yoga, such as hot yoga, may be riskier, particularly for those with other risk factors. Starting out slow under the guidance of a professional and avoiding poses that are beyond one's ability level can help reduce these risks.

Not many studies have specifically looked for risks of meditation and mindfulness practices, so there may be some risks that experts are not aware of. Those who are considering trying meditations for sleep for the first time may prefer to start with guidance from a professional coach or therapist.

People who have an illness or are pregnant may face increased risk [Trusted Source](#) National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NICCH) NCCIH funds and conducts research to help answer important scientific and public health questions about complementary health approaches. [View Source](#) when trying meditation. Those who have epilepsy or heart disease in particular should speak with their doctor before beginning a meditation or relaxation practice.

Other Benefits of Meditation

Among people who use meditation, many of them do so in an attempt to feel less stressed and sleep better. Meditation can also help bring about a positive attitude, boost self-confidence, and increase a person's sense of compassion and tolerance.

Although much more research is needed, experts are hopeful that meditation may help with a number of additional conditions, including:

- Stress and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Anxiety and depression
- Pain
- Problems with weight management

- High blood pressure
- Addictions
- Sexual dysfunction
- Chronic pain
- Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and ulcerative colitis symptoms
- Cancer
- Heart-related problems
- Balance, in the case of yoga and tai chi
- Attention problems

Meditation may be helpful when dealing with stress, but it is not a replacement for medical care. People who have symptoms of a mental or physical health condition, including a [sleep disorder](#), should talk with their health care provider for treatment.

Are You Meditating or Sleeping? - An Expert Explains The Difference Between Meditation and Sleep

Posted: June 01, 2018



³Beginner meditators often feel that they are sleeping during their meditations when in fact they have entered the meditative state. This is quite natural, because until we are familiar with meditation, we associate deep relaxation mainly with sleep.

Clearing the system: release of stress and fatigue

Of course, sometimes we do fall asleep in meditation, but that's fine. It's important not to vigilantly guard against sleep during meditation. Instead, it's better to think of sleep and dullness during meditation as the release of fatigue and stress. For some of us, it'll be necessary to go through a lot of sleep and fatigue during meditation, and sometimes even after meditation. It would help to keep in mind that these signs indicate a very beneficial clearing process.

If you have an overwhelming urge to lie down and sleep during meditation, then do that (but don't lie down unless you feel you absolutely have to!!). When you wake up, sit up and meditate for five or so additional minutes. Your system will have cleared a backlog of fatigue, so even a short meditation after waking will be very useful.

³<https://www.artofliving.org/us-en/meditation/sleep/difference-meditation-sleep>

Differences between sleep and meditation

After a few regular meditations, meditators usually realize that sleep and meditation are quite distinct states. Coming out of sleep, one feels a little dull. But emerging from the deeply settled "no mind" state, one basks in clarity, and feels peaceful and often joyous.

Also, the breathing patterns during deep sleep and meditation are quite different. Deeper states of meditation are associated with very feeble breath or even suspension of breath, whereas in sleep, respiration does reduce, but less.

During your meditations, please don't try to figure out whether you were sleeping or deeply meditating at certain times. Doing so could interfere with the innocence of the meditation process. The statement, "whatever happens is fine," shows the best attitude.

The key distinction between meditation and sleep is alertness in meditation and non-alertness during sleep. But meditative alertness has a different quality than that of the waking state. To understand that distinction, and also how meditation and sleep are different, we need to consider how the four modes of consciousness—mind, intellect, memory, and ego—operate in the waking, dreaming, and sleeping states and also in the fourth state of consciousness, which is experienced in meditation, traditionally called the *turiya* state.

In the waking state, the mind, intellect, memory, and ego all function to some extent. In the dream state, only memory (*chitta*) works actively. In deep sleep, all four disappear—the consciousness rests—devoid of any activity.

In the meditative state, the mind, which receives input from the senses, goes completely underground. Ego also becomes inactive, but the intellect and *chitta* function subtly. [Meditation](#) is very similar to sleep, but with a subtle idea or trace of intellect and, in *turiya*, a spontaneous perception of our real nature.

Letting go into meditation for deeper cleansing



Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar tells us that there are two types of letting go. One is where everything drops and you sink into an unconscious state—this is sleep, a *tamasic* state, where knowledge is not available. The other type of letting go allows you to completely relax, but with slight intention or feeling that very subtly continues—that's meditation.

Meditation and sleep are both hypometabolic states, where breathing and other body activities decline. Both release stresses, but the rest that meditation gives is much deeper than the rest that comes from sleep. Therefore, deeper rooted impressions, or *samskaras*, leave the system.

Yet meditation is completely beyond sleep. It's consciousness, knowingly becoming conscious of itself. That same consciousness is present during waking, dreaming, and sleep, and witnesses all of them.

Although in sleep the consciousness is not active in any of its "modes," it's still present as the witness to sleep. This is how you know that you had a "good sleep."

As Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar beautifully says, *"Wakefulness and sleep are like sunrise and darkness, while dreams are like the twilight in between. Meditation is like the flight to outer space, where there is no sunset, no sunrise—nothing!"*

Written by Chris Dale, Advanced Meditation Course teacher

A Short Meditation for Sleep

It may take practice to master the art of relaxing and letting the mind be at peace. A good place to start is with a simple meditation exercise that involves [breathing exercises for sleep](#).

1. Turn off the lights and phone notifications, set the thermostat to a comfortable temperature, and sit upright in a chair with your feet on the floor or lie comfortably in bed facing up. Place one hand on your chest, the other on your midsection.
2. Breathe in slowly through the nose. The hand on your midsection should rise, while the hand on your chest should stay still. This is called diaphragmatic breathing.
3. Breathe out slowly. Repeat 10 calm, controlled breaths, always making sure to use your diaphragm instead of the chest muscles.
4. Clear your mind and focus on breathing. Try not to become anxious if negative thoughts appear. Acknowledge them, then let them go and return to a place of peace.

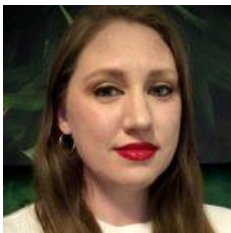
Those who are interested in trying meditation for sleep can learn different techniques through a class or book. There are also many meditation soundtracks available on popular video and audio streaming platforms, as well as dedicated [smartphone applications](#) and [podcasts](#). Meditation techniques are often fairly easy to do at home via live or recorded classes. When using sleep meditation audio tracks on a smartphone before bed, be sure to dim or turn off the screen.

Was this article helpful?

Yes

No

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Meditation vs Sleep: Notable Similarities and Surprising Differences

by Christian Alexander - CEO May 31, 2019

Categories: [how to sleep better](#) [Meditation](#) [sleep facts](#) [stress and lack of sleep](#)



⁴Deep sleep and meditation have many similarities in terms of the benefits they provide to the body and mind. But there are also some crucial differences between them.

Let's explore meditation vs. sleep and take a look at the similarities first.

How Sleep and Meditation Are Similar

Both sleep and meditation have the power to restore and revitalize the body and mind. Numerous scientific studies have established rest is [essential](#) to our physical, mental, and emotional health:

Both the cellular repair and stress-processing parts of your sleep cycle are essential to maintaining good physical and mental health. If these are compromised by poor sleep patterns and lack of a routine, our mental and physical health deteriorates.

Just a few of the many [benefits of getting a good night's sleep](#) include increased levels of happiness, improved fitness level and muscle mass, enhanced memory and learning skills; and more fulfilling sexual relationships.

⁴ <https://www.nestbedding.com/blogs/news/meditation-vs-sleep>

The scientifically verified [physical and emotional benefits](#) of a regular meditation practice are similarly impressive, and include:

- Enhanced vitality
- Improved memory
- Increased positive emotion
- Relaxation and stress relief
- Deeper and more restful sleep
- Improved capacity to introspect
- Increased mental clarity and intelligence
- Improved powers of focus and concentration
- Enhanced creativity (ability to "think outside the box")
- Deepening equanimity and compassion

The Brain In Deep Sleep and Samadhi

When we've got a great night's sleep, this means we've entered deep sleep as well as dream cycles. Similarly, when a meditation session is complete, we've come to the deepest levels of meditation—known in Sanskrit as samadhi—where mind activity suspends fully.

And scientific [research shows](#) in both deep meditation (samadhi) and deep sleep, there's an increase in the brain of low-frequency Delta waves. So our brain behaves similarly in deep sleep and deep meditation.

Another physiological similarity between sleep and meditation has to do with their effect on heart rate and breathing patterns. In both deep sleep and meditation, both heart rate and respiration rates tend to decrease.

However, in deep meditation, the breath can become extremely fine and shallow—and even suspend entirely for periods. While respiration also slows down in a deep sleep, it doesn't slow down as much as in deep meditation.

While both sleep and meditation are beneficial to the human body and mind—in the ways we've seen above—there are some essential differences, which we'll now explore.

How Sleep and Meditation Are Different

When we meditate, our body and mind become deeply relaxed, yet we (as awareness) remain awake and alert. That is the most significant difference between sleep and meditation.

If you've tried meditation, chances are good you've noticed a tendency to drift off to sleep as your body begins to relax. We nod off to sleep in the middle of our meditation session because our human body-mind tends to associate deep relaxation with sleep.

And conversely, we tend to associate being awake with being in body-mind overdrive—i.e., with a tension-filled body and a racing mind.

But in meditation, we train ourselves to remain alert and awake, even as the body and mind are deeply relaxed. It's the heart of meditation practice: a profoundly relaxed body and mind, which allows our true nature—our spiritual essence as pure awareness—to shine brightly through.

Once again, the critical distinction between meditation and sleep is that in meditation, we remain alert, while in sleep, we fall into non-alertness. But meditative alertness has a very different quality than the typical sharpness of the waking state—because meditative alertness comes with the deep relaxation of the body and a spacious, bright and naturally focused mind.

Meditation Can Be More Restful Than Sleep

What may surprise you to learn is that in deep meditation, the level of rest that the body receives can be [two to five times deeper](#) than what it receives in the deepest part of sleep.

That's right—meditation can be *more* relaxing and therapeutic than sleep!

And when the body is resting deeply, the mind also can more easily come to sleep, and release long-held anxiety, stress, clutter, and mental fatigue. And this leads to feeling more calm and relaxed when we rise after a meditation session.

Meditation and Sleep Are Mutually Enhancing

Does this mean we should forego sleep entirely, in favor of meditation? Not at all! A good night's sleep and deep meditation practice—while they're not interchangeable—are mutually enhancing.

Being well-rested from a good night's sleep lessens the chances of falling asleep during your meditation session. And one of the benefits of regular meditation practice is how it enhances your sleep.

So we might consider meditation and sleep to be akin to our right and left hands: while they're not identical, they do work together beautifully.

Meditation Connects Us With Inner Peace and Joy

One of the most profound benefits of meditation is its power to connect us with inner peace, joy, wisdom, and freedom—that is wholly independent of external circumstances. Being rooted in this unconditioned and durable peace and freedom dramatically enhances our ability to navigate our lives skillfully.

The bright, awake awareness fully unveiled via meditation is the witness of the waking, dreaming, and deep-sleep states. It's what remains constant throughout our nighttime and daytime experiences.

As meditation teacher [Ravi Shankar beautifully explains](#):

Wakefulness and sleep are like sunrise and darkness, while dreams are like the twilight in between. Meditation is like the flight to outer space, where there is no sunset, no sunrise—nothing!

The Bottom Line

Sleep and meditation are similar in that they both contribute to physical, mental, and emotional health and wellbeing. They both reduce stress and help to revitalize the body and mind.

The primary difference between sleep and meditation is that in meditation, we remain alert, awake, and aware—while in sleep, we lack alertness, and instead fall into dullness and non-awareness.

Over time, a regular meditation practice can enhance the quality of our sleep. And sleeping well sets the stage for more productive meditation sessions. So the two are mutually beneficial, in a beautiful way.

When You Need to Catch Up On Sleep, Is Meditation The Answer?

⁵Is meditation the remedy for sleep loss? This article explores how and if we can catch up on sleep and what part meditation plays in good sleep hygiene.



[Insight Timer Editorial Team](#)

Insight Timer is the top free meditation app on iOS and Android.

- **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING**



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Both sleep and meditation are important for resting the mind, and do so in a mutually beneficial way. A restful night's sleep supports our meditation practice by keeping us

⁵ <https://insighttimer.com/blog/can-you-catch-up-on-sleep-with-meditation/>

alert and clear headed. Meditation practice helps us sleep better, and can even reduce our need for sleep. **So, can you catch up on sleep with meditation?**

Despite the similarities between sleep and meditation, they are different and neither can replace the other. To live our healthiest and happiest lives we need both a good night's sleep and a daily meditation practice.

Can You Catch Up On Sleep By Meditating?

We might think sleep is for the body, while meditation is for the mind, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Sleep and meditation each contribute to the health of both body and mind in surprisingly similar ways. *If you are interested in learning more about all the similar benefits of sleep and meditation, we have added them at the end of this article.*

Experience tells us we feel better after a good night's sleep. Likewise, for over 2,000 years meditation practitioners have anecdotally concluded they feel happier, more calm, peaceful and at ease. So why aren't we going to bed early every night and waking up to meditate?

We Are Not Sleeping (Nor Meditating) Enough

Sleep and daily meditation are the secret to success, and yet in pursuit of success, we're not doing either as much as we should be. Lack of sleep is a worldwide problem that spans cultures and socioeconomic class.

[In the United States](#), 70% of adults report not getting enough sleep at least once a month, over 10% of those claim nightly insufficiencies. [In Australia](#), 60% of adults report not getting enough sleep at least once per week, and over 14% claim symptoms that would qualify them for a diagnosis of clinical insomnia.

Most adults need a minimum of 8-10 hours of sleep per night for optimal health and wellness. Sleeping only 7 hours may not seem like a big deal, but sleep restriction accumulates into sleep debt over time.

Multiple studies have taught us [the cumulative effects of sleep restriction are the same as one night of total sleep deprivation.](#)

Catching Up On Sleep Is Hard To Do

We like to think we can catch up on sleep, but it's a complicated proposal. It largely depends on how much sleep we've been losing, and when.

Short Term Sleep Loss

Short term sleep loss is defined as one bad night's rest in an otherwise restful week. This is the type of sleep we can catch up on, although it takes much longer than we might think. [A 2016 study](#) found it takes four days of a complete night's sleep to fully recover from a loss of just one hour. Sleep debt is a deficit that must be repaid with interest.

Do you often wake at night and struggle to get back to sleep? [Bookmark this playlist with meditations and music for insomnia that help when you are awake in the middle of the night.](#)

Long Term Sleep Loss

The above is not good news if we're missing out on 1-2 hours of sleep several nights in a row. The resulting sleep deficit is nearly impossible to make up for. When we're chronically sleep deprived, it can take six months to a year to return to a healthy sleep pattern. [There's no such thing as making up for lost sleep over one lazy weekend.](#)

Overnight Sleep Loss

Cutting our sleep short by going to bed later or waking up earlier has less of a detrimental effect than losing sleep in the middle of the circadian night. Overnight shift work has been associated with an increase in cardiovascular disease, cancer and diabetes. Shift work sleep disorder, SWSD, develops in those who are unable to recover from staying up all night, even with day-time sleep. Symptoms include excessive lack of energy, cognitive decline, insomnia, moodiness and depression.

Read more: *While all humans have a circadian rhythm that flows through sleep-wake cycles over roughly 24 hours, [a chronotype is more specific to each individual – learn more.](#)*

Meditation For Better Sleep

Sleep Hygiene refers to the habits and practices that promote a good night's sleep. **Good Sleep Hygiene** includes the following:

- Avoid caffeine or other stimulants after the morning hours
- Exercise daily, preferably not close to bed-time
- Get adequate exposure to full-spectrum, natural light during the day
- Avoid screen time within the last hour of sleep
- Sleep in a darkened and quiet space
- Don't use your bed for work or other daytime activities
- [Establish a relaxing evening routine before going to bed](#)

While sleep hygiene is important, [studies show](#) meditating daily has a much greater effect on a proper night's sleep. Meditation improves quantity and quality of sleep in the following ways:

- Regulates sleep by regulating the parasympathetic nervous system
- [Significantly improves deep sleep quality](#)
- [Increases melatonin production for better sleep](#)
- Helps us let go of thoughts that would otherwise keep us awake
- Alleviates daytime symptoms related to lack of sleep
- Acts as a free sleep aid with limited side effects

Meditation makes the sleep we do get more restful, and can thereby speed up the process through which we're able to recover from a sleep deficit.

Explore free sleep meditations,
music & talks.

Read more: [Having trouble falling asleep? Your thoughts may be getting in the way.](#)
[This article explores how to break the worry-sleep cycle.](#)

Meditation For... Less Sleep?

Meditation is not a cure to catch up on sleep, and there is no replacement for sleep. But once our sleep account is balanced, those who continue to meditate daily may find they need less sleep.

The current science says the amount of nightly sleep we need is genetic. We cannot train ourselves to live on less sleep by skipping a few hours nightly. There's no such thing as building a tolerance to drowsiness. Each of us has a sleep number, and **no amount of caffeine can change it.**

And yet, a regular meditation practice may be the one thing that breaks this rule. Those who meditate consistently [appear to need less sleep compared to others of their same age and sex](#). Most likely because meditation provides body and mind with some of the same restorative benefits as sleep.

Neither can ever replace the other, but if it's better sleep you're looking for, slow down and meditate. If you're hoping to improve your meditation practice, get more sleep. To live your healthiest and happiest life, combine the two regularly. Practice good sleep hygiene, and meditate daily.

Read more: [Explore how to meditate lying down as well as popular types of meditation that are best practices lying down.](#)



Sleep vs Meditation: The Benefits

As promised earlier in this article about if it is possible to catch up on sleep, below we listed five essential health benefits sleep and meditation share.

Heart Health: Sleep heals and repairs the heart and blood vessels overnight. Not getting enough sleep [is correlated](#) with high blood pressure and coronary heart

disease. Sleep deprivation stimulates the sympathetic nervous system, this stress leads to hypertension.

Meditation not only calms the sympathetic nervous system, but demonstrably lowers blood pressure and heart rate, improves blood circulation, [and decreases cardiovascular mortality](#). Fascinating studies show meditation cleans the blood of lipids that put us at risk for cardiovascular disease.

Immune System Health: Immune system activity varies from day to night and requires a healthy circadian rhythm. Sleeping well overnight keeps immunity regulated. [Sleep also plays an important role in the memory of the immune system](#), strengthening its ability to respond to future infections.

[Results of randomized controlled trials](#) suggest meditation can reduce markers of inflammation, increase immune cell count, and slow immune cell aging. [Meditation has positive effects on immune cell activity](#) and can increase antibody response by reducing stress.

Hormone Health: Cortisol, the hormone that causes stress, builds up when we're lacking sleep. After a night of restless sleep, cortisol continues to increase the following day. [Sleep also regulates the hunger and satiety hormones, ghrelin and leptin](#). When we're tired, we feel hungrier and we reach for the unhealthiest of foods.

Meditation down regulates stress response by decreasing cortisol production. Meditation may also have anti-aging effects thanks to an increase in DHEA and growth hormone. Meditation helps us sleep better [by increasing production of melatonin](#), an important hormone for sleep.

Brain Health: Sleep is required for building relational memory. Relational memory is the ability to connect things by context, order or location. Relational memory takes place in the hippocampus, an area that's strengthened with consistent meditation practice.

Sleep protects against memory loss and diseases like Alzheimer's and Dementia [by clearing out proteins and toxins](#) that disrupt cognitive abilities, behaviour and judgement.

[Meditation has similar neuroprotective effects.](#) Meditation strengthens neuronal circuits and enhances cognitive capacity. Those who meditate regularly demonstrate less age-related cognitive decline in certain cortical regions.

Psychological Health: Insomnia is associated with several mental health disorders, particularly depression. Lack of sleep leads to more frequent outbursts of anger. Conversely, getting a good night's sleep is a strong predictor of happiness. [Those who sleep better report greater life satisfaction.](#)

Meditation decreases activity in the amygdala, the area of the brain responsible for our reaction to negative stimuli. Meditation improves general feelings of wellbeing, and [has proven helpful](#) in the treatment of anxiety, addiction, aggression and depression.

More guides to improved sleep:

[How to fall asleep faster](#)

[What causes insomnia?](#)

[How to improve the quality of your sleep](#)

[What is the best sleep aid?](#)

[How to enhance your bedtime routine](#)

[Is meditation a solution for sleep apnea?](#)

[How to sleep better](#)

[Falling asleep with bedtime stories](#)

Related posts

Why Sleep Meditation Works for Kids and How to Try It
Meditation can help young children release energy, process concerns, and find comfort at night. Try these simple steps to see if sleep meditation can make bedtime easier for your child—and family!
By [Kristine Jepsen](#)

Published on February 18, 2020

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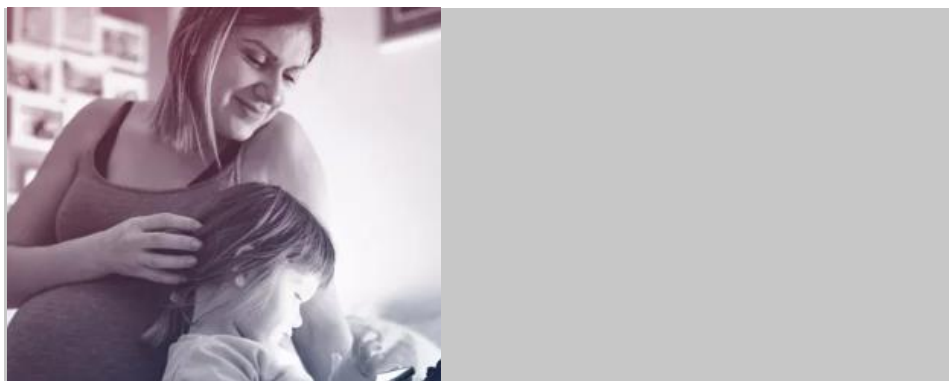


PHOTO: DRAZEN_/GETTY IMAGES

⁶If your household is like mine, the evening drill for anyone not paying rent goes something like this: Bath, brush teeth, books, bed. Emphasis on "BED."

Occasionally there's mutiny in the ranks, and that's where "sleep meditation" or "bedtime meditation" techniques sound really attractive—almost the stuff of fantasy. Designed to help kids relax and drift comfortably off to sleep, this type of meditation encourages the brain frequencies known as the "[alpha state](#)"—when you're relaxed while awake—as in, daydreaming or nodding off but still responsive to sounds, such as a telephone ringing (or preschooler's door opening after light's out), before deeper phases of sleep.

⁶ <https://www.parents.com/toddlers-preschoolers/sleep/issues/why-sleep-meditation-for-kids-works-and-how-to-try-it/>

[Why and How to Teach Your Kids Mindfulness](#)

But should you start a sleep meditation practice with someone in footie pajamas, and if so, how?

"The short answer is, 'Yes!'" says Cory Cochiolo, a meditation expert, hypnotherapist, and author of the forthcoming [Bedtime Meditations for Kids: Quick, Calming Exercises to Help Kids Get to Sleep](#). Children's needs are no different than adults' in many ways, she begins. "At bedtime especially, they have a fundamental need to feel safe and comfortable, to feel happy, to not be worried about anything, to feel loved. The key with any meditation practice is to try to create a warm, loving environment that they've participated in."

This is sometimes easier said than done. "When my own daughters were young, I was pretty militant," confesses Cochiolo. "I was big on routine, which kids need and love, but also on timelines and other organizing factors, like having their beds or rooms set up a certain way. What I've learned is that kids invest in and trust a routine most when they've participated in making it."

Want to try it? Use these expert tips as a guide for setting your toddler or preschooler up for sleep meditation success:

Give your child a say in their bedtime setting. Within reason, says Cochiolo, let your child choose their bedtime companions—toys, pillows, even the color and texture of the sheets or blankets on their beds, or the colors of their walls.

Encourage kids to co-create a story-based guided meditation. "The brain loves a story, and children this age are naturally curious to follow a story to its end," says Cochiolo. "But instead of insisting on a book, or limiting choices to printed books, ask instead, 'Would you prefer a book? Or would you like me to make up a story?' In other words, offer choices you'll be happy with, but realize it's a really big deal to give them a choice to relax into, to fall into sleep easier."

- **RELATED:** [I'm a Mom and a Children's Book Author: Here's How to Tell a Really Good Story](#)

Choose a voice your child likes hearing. Maybe it's your voice (yay!), but maybe it's not, explains Cochiolo. If you're streaming a guided meditation (see a few options below), have your child help you choose. "The kids who give me feedback on my web content are really good about telling me when something

sounds creepy," says Cochiolo. "Maybe the music isn't right for them. Or, they didn't like the accent of the voice." (Pro tip: Listen for opportunities to make your voice more hushed or slow down the pacing of your words. These are natural cues for the body to do the same, drifting toward sleep.)

Be persistent. Change is hard! Don't give up if your child resists, says Cochiolo. "If it's just not working to ease into meditation at bedtime, sit down with your child at other times and have it be something that's fun." One easy way to check your parent baggage is to expect each participant to focus at a rate of one minute for each year of age. "Can you practice meditation for the minutes corresponding to your age?" she challenges. Another trick is to have a guided meditation playing throughout your child's bedtime routine so it becomes the soundtrack for comfort and safety. "Don't make a big deal of it—just leave it playing, and they'll get used to it."

Practice your own gratitude. One of Cochiolo's favorite activities ([demonstrated here by story characters Heidi, Cherry, and Vaya](#)) is the Reassurance Game. "When you're snuggled in, take turns with your child giving heartfelt compliments." For example, (parent to child): "I think you are so smart. You are good at asking questions." (Child, addressing parent): "Mommy, I think you're so loving." The goal, says Cochiolo, is to "fill up your child's cup of love so they can relax and fall asleep in the comfort of being understood and accepted."

- **RELATED:** [6 Mindfulness and Meditation Apps for Kids](#)

Finally, remember that meditations can (and should!) be adapted to the mood or the needs of your child, which at tender young ages, can change by the hour. "Some meditations are designed to release energy built up before bed, and some are serious," explains Cochiolo. "Some just encourage talking about your day, and some are silly. In the end, they're all intended to help kids feel better in their bodies and quiet their mind." Here are a couple of our favorite resources to get you started:

- [Cory's Conscious Living \(free\)](#) — This YouTube channel contains 500 meditations for children, is vetted by kids, and is organized around recurring characters and themes.
- [New Horizon Meditation & Sleep Stories \(free\)](#) — YouTube channel and app for children and adults full of guided meditations aimed to aid with sleep.

Clear Your Head With Sleep Meditation

[BLOG](#) > [WELLNESS](#) > [BETTER SLEEP](#)

December 25, 2020 | BY: [Cemile Kavountzis](#)



⁷When we sleep, our bodies heal and our minds unravel. Sleep is our daily recovery from a busy and stressful day.

However, nearly 40 percent of 20-to-39-year-olds are sleeping less than the recommended seven to nine hours, according to the [American Sleep Association](#) — and that was before the pandemic,

Lots of us are also experiencing “coronasomnia.” Studies have found [stressful events, such as COVID-19, can trigger sleep issues](#).

But even something as short as a [10-minute meditation has benefits](#) that can help you cope with everything going on.

Meditation also relaxes your mind for sleep. In fact, the Dalai Lama advised, “Sleep is the best meditation.”

⁷<https://www.beachbodyondemand.com/blog/sleep-meditation>



What Is Sleep Meditation?

Practicing meditation any time of day generally strengthens your nervous system's rest-and-digest function.

While this can help reduce anxiety and improve focus during the day, at night, it can invite relaxation, according to [Benjamin Irons](#), CMI, owner of Zen with Ben.

Studies have also found [mindful meditation can improve sleep quality](#).

There are a few options for incorporating sleep meditation into your bedtime routine.

"Practices of meditation, gratitude, loving kindness, and yoga are all beneficial to help you fall asleep easier and stay asleep," says [Gretchen Schutte](#), E-RYT 500, who also specializes in yoga nidra, a form of guided meditation.



How to Prepare for a Sleep Meditation

“It’s helpful to meditate in a place you associate with quiet and calm,” says Irons, which includes your bedroom.

“It helps to establish a practice routine — same time, same place, and same style — until you feel comfortable to branch out, challenge yourself a bit, and grow in the practice,” he explains.

“My sleep ritual includes no screens for at least 30 minutes before bed, a warm shower with lavender soap, practicing a gentle inversion like legs up a wall for three to five minutes, while reflecting on what I am grateful for that day,” advises Schutte.

According to Irons, here are three sleep meditations you can do in bed, lights out, eyes closed, and ready for sleep.

1. Breath Connection

Start by relaxing into your bed, close your eyes, and surrender to gravity.

“Visualize inhaling a healing light and exhaling a stream from your feet, releasing any tension, thoughts, or emotions that are no longer serving you — and let go,” says Irons. “Allow the exhalation to be longer than the inhalation.”

Set your intention to fully rest through the night and think, “I give myself permission to sleep now and will awake again on time, feeling rested and refreshed for a new day.”

2. Body Scan

The basic goal of a body scan meditation is to find tension in the body, while focusing on the breath, explains Iron.

“Inhale, scan the body for tension. Exhale, release any tension or negative emotions.”

Iron recommends working in a progressive and systematic fashion, either from head to feet, or vice versa. “Spend at least three long breaths in each region and continually surrender to relaxation like a trust fall,” he says.

For any “sticky” areas, try gently constricting your muscles as you inhale and releasing as you exhale. Think of connecting your breathing to your body like a massage.

3. Energy Exchange

This practice is similar to tidying up before bedtime or not waking up to a pile of dishes in the sink.

“Visualize yourself returning all the energy — thoughts, opinions, and emotions — you’ve collected from others throughout the day to their source,” says Irons. “Any energy that is not yours should return to its home.”

After you feel this has been completed, “Invite your energy to return back to you for a sense of unity and centering,” Irons says. “Call back any energy you willingly or unwillingly gave away. Welcome your energy back, feeling calmer and more relaxed with each breath as you slip away into restful sleep.”

Guided Sleep Meditations and Apps

“A guided relaxation meditation can help your body relax and prepare for sleep,” says Schutte.

“Yoga nidra, which you can practice any time of day, is scripted in a way that guides the body and mind to a place of deep relaxation,” she adds.

If you want to incorporate sleep meditation music, Irons says, “Any relaxing music combined with breath work when you’re ready for bed will be effective.”

Unstress: 21 Days of Meditation for Relaxation, Calm, and Less Anxiety

Another option for guided meditation are apps like Unplug. For a quick and easy way to get started with daily meditation, Beachbody teamed up with Unplug for [Unstress](#), a 21-day guided meditation program.

Unstress helps you tackle stress and anxiety, clear your mind, and improve your sleep in about 10 minutes a day.

Tips for Getting a Good Night's Sleep



Theresa Oswald, MD

June 14, 2021

5 min

⁸In thinking about how to live a healthy lifestyle, understanding the mysteries of sleep might just be the final frontier. There is a plethora of information

⁸https://himalayaninstitute.org/online/tips-for-getting-a-good-nights-sleep/?gclid=CjwKCAiA3KefBhByEiwAi2LDHLO9FYPCEniZ03bqwyGbaCQkySom7-VeWnUV93YnCnvz3eGPzxEb4RoCIQwQAvD_BwE

available about how to eat in a healthier way and how to move more, but getting better quality sleep takes time and strategy. If you've ever had a sleep issue, you know it's not just a matter of willing yourself to sleep. In fact, we currently have an epidemic of sleep problems. The Centers for Disease Control reports that one in three adults in the US gets less than the recommended amount of sleep (7–9 hours a night for adults, according to most sources). Lack of sleep causes tiredness, fatigue, reduced alertness, and low energy. The quality of our sleep affects our overall health and almost every system in the body, including our hormones and immune system. Research shows that chronically getting an insufficient quantity or quality of sleep increases the risk of high blood pressure, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, anxiety, depression, and mental disease.

Sleep Problems and Their Causes

There are several types of sleep problems, including trouble falling asleep; waking up multiple times or waking up early; having trouble falling back asleep; and not feeling well-rested when waking up in the morning or feeling very sleepy during the day. A number of different factors can cause sleep problems, including stress, anxiety, and lifestyle factors such as nicotine and alcohol intake. Nicotine acts as a stimulant, making it harder to fall asleep, and alcohol may make you drowsy but reduces your ability to enter deep sleep and can cause early waking. Some medical conditions, like sleep apnea and restless leg syndrome, can cause difficulty in sleeping. There are also some prescription medications, such as corticosteroids, stimulants for attention deficit, and certain blood pressure and asthma medications, that can interrupt

a good night's sleep. If you think a medication or condition is disturbing your sleep, talk to your healthcare provider for other possible options.

Strategies to Improve Sleep

Knowing how important sleep is to our health, let's review some things we can consider to improve sleep. A system called Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) combines two types of strategies for improving sleep: strategies that work with thoughts and beliefs that may interfere with sleep, and strategies for sleep hygiene—cleaning up our sleep by cultivating lifestyle habits that help us sleep better. In working with beliefs and thoughts, for example, CBT might lead us to the insight that "If I don't get enough sleep, I won't be able to function," which brings to our awareness the importance of good sleep. Furthermore, this realization may prompt us to observe what thoughts may be intruding on our sleep.

As far as sleep hygiene, or lifestyle habits, how can we draw on CBT, as well as yoga and ayurveda, to cultivate better habits with regard to our sleep schedule, diet, exercise, and sleep environment? Let's start with some simple guidelines regarding sleep itself:

- Do not go to bed unless you are sleepy.
- Wake up at the same time every day, including weekends and vacations.
- Get out of bed if you are unable to sleep.
- Minimize non-sleep activities in bed (e.g., watching TV).
- Limit napping, but if you need a daytime nap, try to nap less than 30 minutes and before 3:00 p.m.

Next, let's look at our diet and exercise habits and how to create a conducive sleep environment and bedtime routine:

- Sleep is a time for assimilation of food and thoughts, so limit heavy meals and heavy discussions within the three hours before sleep. This allows digestion of ideas and food to be completed during waking hours, and the path is set for utilization and storage during sleep.
- Exercise releases tension that builds up in our body during the day, while also using energy. This sets the stage for our body to slow down and be tired when it is time for sleep. Get exercise during the day to help you get to sleep faster and sleep longer.
- Make your bedroom environment comfortable: keep the room temperature cool, minimize noise and light, and keep your clock out of clear view to prevent clock watching.
- Develop a calming, quiet, relaxing bedtime routine or ritual to act as a buffer from the stress of the day. Consider reading a book, taking a warm bath, or drinking herbal tea like chamomile or lemon balm.

Finally, breathing (*pranayama*) and other mind-body techniques can be very effective in reducing hyperalertness and promoting a sense of calm. The simplest and most profound of these takes just a few moments and is literally right under our nose—focusing our mind on the flow of breath in the nostrils. Our mind can only do one of two things: either have an inner conversation or feel a physical sensation. It cannot do both at the same time. Thus, when the mind's chatter keeps us awake, focusing our awareness on a sensation is the best solution. Focusing on the sensation of the airflow at the entrances of both nostrils helps us quickly quiet our mind.

Our mind can only do one of two things: either have an inner conversation or feel a physical sensation. It cannot do both at the same time.

Try it for yourself! As you inhale, notice a faint sensation of coolness at the openings of your nostrils. Your lungs will warm that air, which will create a gentle sensation of warmth in the nostrils as you exhale. As you focus on the coolness of the airflow during inhalation and the warmth of the airflow during exhalation, the mind becomes quiet—its conversations cease.

This time-tested method is one of the most effective for interrupting unhelpful thought loops and bringing a calm quietude as a gateway to sleep. Additional techniques for calming the mind and body include systematic relaxation techniques; diaphragmatic breathing and other breathing exercises; meditation; and guided imagery.

Putting even a few of these strategies to use can make a big difference in how well we sleep and thus in our health, energy level, and mental clarity. In the next article we will look, more specifically, at why sleep is critical to the health and functioning of our brain, playing a major role in cleaning the brain and in the storing of memories.

How Functional Foods May Improve Sleep and Immune Health

Jan 10



Author: Dakota Coulter

⁹Hate being sick in bed? What if I told you the prevention might be *more* time in bed. You don't need to sleep all day, but getting enough sleep and improving your sleep quality may support immune function.

Sleep and immune health are connected: You spend more time sleeping when you're sick because sleep regulates your immune system. Take advantage of this connection by improving your sleep to improve your immune system.

Sleeping isn't always easy—falling asleep can be hard and staying asleep even worse. One of the best solutions to poor sleep is easy and simple: food! Eating certain functional foods can help you fall asleep easier, stay asleep longer, and overall improve your quality of sleep. Functional foods are those that have extra benefits past the standard nutrition. Let's explore some food that improves sleeping and in turn, immune health.

There are so many great functional foods you can eat to boost your sleep, but here are a few to get started with.

⁹https://iffassociation.org/learn/how-functional-foods-may-improve-sleep-and-immune-health?gclid=CjwKCAiA3KefBhByEiwAi2LDHOzMpvPw9EXw3Ukc4c1nd6izYMXkwcmq7wEdiTWVVW7we1ZPuLavfTxoCJzQQAvD_BwE



Tart Cherry Juice

More specifically, Montmorency cherry juice, *Prunus cerasus*. These bright red, sour cherries are great in a lot of ways but the best is the impact it can have on sleep.

This comes from an increase in **melatonin** release in the body triggered by phytochemicals in the cherries. With an increase in melatonin, your sleep becomes more efficient. As an added bonus, this juice may help prevent sleeping disorders

Lettuce

This leafy green has a long history of being used as a sleep aid in folk medicine. It increases how long you spend asleep by first inducing sleep and then prolonging it. Overall it may also improve your sleep quality as well. These benefits come from **lactucin**, which is naturally present in lettuce. All varieties contain this but look to romaine lettuce, *Lactuca sativa*, for the highest amount.

Whole grains and fiber

Whole grains are rich in these key sleep quality improving nutrients:

- Potassium
- Calcium
- Magnesium

They also contain more fiber, which might help you get more deep sleep. Low fiber intake has been associated with increased light sleep. Brown rice combines both whole grain and fiber, plus rice's high glycemic index may also improve sleep. The higher index helps your body convert more **serotonin** and therefore **melatonin**. Eating foods higher on the glycemic index, the scale for food's effect on your blood sugar levels, also helps you to fall asleep faster.

Barley grass powder

If whole grains aren't for you, or you're just a white rice person, barley grass powder is a great alternative. It also contains the same nutrient trio as whole grains but also **GABA, gamma-Aminobutyric acid**, an amino acid important in sleep regulation. This can provide even greater sleep quality benefits and also helps to promote sleep. These benefits make it one of the best options for sleep improvement and is easy to pair with other functional foods.



Milk

A warm glass of milk before bed can help to improve your sleep efficiency, meaning not only more but better sleep. It does this thanks to high levels of **tryptophan**, the same thing in turkey that leaves you sleepy after Thanksgiving.

It can be found in a lot of other high protein foods but milk before bed is a lot easier than roasting a whole turkey. If you're dairy free, don't worry, soy milk is also a good option as soy also contains tryptophan. And it doesn't have to be warm milk, drink it at any temp you like!

How you eat is just as impactful as what you eat

Bad diets and eating structures both shorten the amount of time you spend asleep. Try eating three meals a day and reducing your evening snacking to improve sleep.

Avoiding the following at night can also help to improve sleep:

- Caffeine
- Alcohol
- Large meals

More sleep supports your immune system

No matter what foods you pick to help, the amount you sleep is important. Getting less sleep may weaken your immune system. And sleeping for shorter amounts of time may make you more likely to get a cold. Weakening your immune system may impact your sleep as well. You could spend less time in deep sleep and also wake up more.

How much sleep you need varies a bit, but teens should get 8-10 hours and adults at least 7 (more is good though). And remember that sleep quality is important too if you want to feel healthy and rested!

Working in the above foods for sleep and changes may just make you sleep better and be healthier. You don't have to completely change your diet but starting with just one small change may help you fall asleep easier. So try a glass of milk or tart cherry juice before bed, swap out white rice for brown, or eat an extra leafy lettuce salad. Happy eating, and sweet dreams!

Author's Note

Sleep has always been a struggle for me, I've had insomnia since I was a kid. Whenever I couldn't sleep my mom would make me a mug of warm milk and tuck me into bed to drink it. I would end up warm, content, and best of all- sleepy. Warm milk is also a warm memory to me and I can't recommend it enough!

BEST FOODS THAT HELP YOU SLEEP

Written by [Dreamcloud Editorial Team](#)

Last Updated on Dec 06, 2022

[Sleep Aids](#)

In this article:

- 15 Best Foods to Eat Before Bed
- Other Foods and Drinks that Help You Sleep
- Foods to Avoid Before Bed
- Drinks to Avoid Before Bed
- How Does Your Diet Affect Sleep?
- Is Eating Before Bed Bad?
- Conclusion

Are you looking for quick remedies that can help you fall asleep faster? The good news is that the answer may be in your kitchen!

There are some best foods and drinks for sleep. Foods that help you sleep mainly contain sleep-regulating hormones like melatonin and serotonin and nutrients like calcium and [magnesium](#).

This article covers what foods to eat before bed, what to drink to sleep faster, types of food and drinks to avoid before bed, and explains how diet affects your sleep.

15 Best Foods to Eat Before Bed

1. Fish

¹⁰Fatty fish is one of the best foods that help you sleep through the night. Whether you eat salmon or tuna or halibut, all are rich in vitamin B6, which helps make [melatonin](#) - a sleep hormone our brain releases in response to darkness. Melatonin signals our body to sleep and combats various [sleep disorders](#).

Aside from that, a fatty fish also contains exceptional levels of omega 3 fatty acids and vitamin D - and both nutrients are powerful enough to produce serotonin - a hormone that stabilizes our mood and fixes sleep problems.

2. Turkey

You can count on Turkey when it comes to foods that make you sleepy. This popular Thanksgiving food contains high levels of [tryptophan](#) and amino acid, which increases [melatonin production](#). A roasted turkey also contains a good amount of protein i.e 8 grams per ounce. Protein consumption before bed means [less waking up throughout the night](#). If you have trouble falling asleep, try delicious and nutritious Turkey tonight!

3. Almonds

Almonds before bed are popular among snacks that help you sleep. If you wake up at night with hunger pangs, almonds are a ready-to-eat option. You can also prepare milk from whole almonds, a wonderful alternative for people with lactose intolerance.

¹⁰https://www.dreamcloudsleep.com/posts/foods-that-help-you-sleep/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=p_1365122800_142893316925_641464134238&utm_content=cpc_generic&gclid=CjwKCAiA3KefBhByEiwAi2LDHMqGOWVE-6Q4L2YsEXpzijzWz0BfDiHeTaGb2EsV-1hek5boYgKzGhoCFZEQAvD_BwE

This tree nut contains many beneficial nutrients and is a great source of [melatonin](#). An ounce of almonds provides you with 19% of your daily requirement of [magnesium](#). Both [magnesium](#) and melatonin play a key role in regulating the sleep-wake cycle and are used as a potential [treatment for insomnia](#).

4. Whole Grains

Whole grains produce insulin, which in turn activates tryptophan function in the brain. People with low levels of magnesium frequently wake up at night. Having whole grains rich in magnesium before bed will help you to enjoy a restful sleep at night. A whole-grain wrap is an easy-to-prepare option for eating before bed.

5. Warm Milk

People with a nut allergy can prefer warm milk before bed provided they are not lactose intolerant. Warm milk has been on the list of best foods and drinks for sleep for decades. Have a glass of warm milk before bed and you will see how quickly it [helps you unwind](#). This drink has high levels of tryptophan that puts sleep hormones to work and prevents [movement at night](#)

6. Tart Cherry Juice

For those who are wondering what to drink to sleep faster, try tart cherry juice. Four compounds that influence sleep regulation are -

- Melatonin
- Tryptophan
- Potassium and
- Serotonin

And Tart cherries are rich in all the above four nutrients. No wonder why cherry juice is an outstanding drink that [promotes sleep](#) and prevents night-time awakenings. Plus there are no side effects! As per one pilot [study](#) cherry juice can reduce insomnia symptoms in older adults.

7. White Rice

Do you know higher rice consumption is [associated with better sleep](#) as compared to noodles and bread? White rice is easily digestible and makes tryptophan work faster in your brain! This rice has a high glycemic index (GI) and naturally increases blood sugar and insulin levels. High GI also promotes better sleep. To improve your sleep quality, eat white rice one hour before bed.

8. Lettuce

Lettuce is one of the best foods to have for dinner because it has a [mild sedative-hypnotic effect](#). The plant has a phytonutrient called lactucarium and the sedative effects are due to the plant's n-butanol fraction in the compound lactucin.

9. Bananas

Without bananas the list of foods that promote sleep is incomplete. Eating a [banana before bed](#) helps you feel fuller and keep you asleep throughout the night. The fruit exceptionally increases serotonin and melatonin levels in our body.

Sleep-boosting [nutrients](#) in bananas are -

- Tryptophan
- Magnesium
- Potassium
- Carbs
- Vitamin B6

All four of them work together to act as sedatives and [induce sleep](#) through different mechanisms in our brains and body. They help [reduce muscle cramps](#), beat insomnia, and [restless leg syndrome](#) - and all these three health issues are associated with poor quality.

10. Yogurt

If you are looking for healthy late-night snacks, yogurt is a fantastic option. It is rich in calcium that's healthy for bones and casein protein (in Greek yogurt) that digests slowly and helps you feel full longer. Calcium activates sleep hormones and is important for people with [difficulty falling asleep](#)

11. Kiwi

Kiwi is one of the best fruits that help you sleep! According to a [study](#), people who ate two kiwi-fruits one hour before bedtime for four weeks reported an increase in sleep time and improved sleep efficiency. The reason why kiwi helps you fall asleep faster could be a bunch of sleep-promoting compounds in it like -

- Melatonin
- Serotonin
- Carotenoids
- Anthocyanins
- Flavonoids
- Potassium
- Calcium
- Magnesium
- Folate
- Vitamin C

Do you know kiwi is a go-to snack for [carb cravings](#), at night? Eat kiwi before bed and see the difference!

12. Chamomile tea

Chamomile has no [negative side effects](#) so it is the best tea before bed. In a [study](#), 80 women - with poor sleep quality and sleep efficiency - consumed chamomile tea daily for 2 weeks and showed massive improvement. Another [study](#) involving older adults claims that consumption of chamomile extract for 28 consecutive days improves

sleep quality. You can also enjoy similar sleep benefits by taking chamomile in other forms instead of tea.

13. Eggs

Eggs are always on the list of best foods for sleep because they are full of hunger-satisfying proteins, nutrients, and tryptophan, which is a precursor to serotonin and melatonin. What's more? They are also a great source of melatonin! Add eggs to your dinner and see how quickly you fall and stay asleep.

14. Kale

This leafy green is a power pack of calcium and antioxidants and both serve as triggers for our brain to use tryptophan and convert it into the sleep hormone melatonin. Eat kale before bed so that your sleep hormones work faster.

15. Barley Grass Powder

Last but not the least, barley grass powder is a powerful sleep-promoting food. It is packed with -

- Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid (GABA)
- Tryptophan
- Calcium
- Potassium

When GABA enters and attaches to the GABA receptor, it makes you feel calm and [induces sleep](#). Research says GABA has a role in preventing insomnia.

You can add the barley grass powder to salad dressings or smoothies if you are preparing a healthy late-night snack. You can also mix the powder into a glass of plain water and your energy drink is ready.

Other Foods and Drinks that Help You Sleep

Other than the 15 food items mentioned above, there are some more foods that help you sleep, which are as follows:

- Figs
- Sweet potato
- Honey
- Tofu
- Oatmeal

Some best late-night snacks are :

- Popcorn
- Dark chocolate
- Hummus
- Walnuts
- Pistachios
- Cottage Cheese and Crackers

If you are not in the mood to prepare dinner or eat snacks, here are some drinks that help you sleep faster:

- Ashwagandha Tea
- Goji Berry Juice
- Passionflower Tea
- Peppermint Tea
- Pure coconut water

Foods to Avoid Before Bed

While there are foods that help you sleep, some foods keep you awake at night. Check out some foods to avoid before bed, if you want to sleep well:

Tomato-based sauces

While a plate of delicious red-sauce pasta with a hearty amount of [tomatoes](#) seems tempting, eating it before bed can cause acid reflux and heartburn, which in turn can interfere with your sleep.

High-fat food

[Fat-rich food](#) takes a long time to digest! So, avoid bedtime snacks like burgers, pizzas, if you want to have restful sleep at night.

Fried Food

Just like high-fat food, [fried food](#) also takes a longer time to digest and can cause heartburn. You may not enjoy high-quality sleep if you intake fried food close to bedtime.

High Sodium Food

High sodium food like canned entrees, smoked meat, and salted nuts dehydrates the body, causing tiredness and fatigue. Eating such food before bed contributes to [disrupted – or “superficial” – sleep](#).

Spicy Food

People prone to heartburn should avoid spicy foods before sleep. Lying down [aggravates the](#) problem and delays the onset of sleep.

Drinks to Avoid Before Bed

Just like the above foods, there are some drinks that [prevent restful sleep at night](#). Let's explore which drinks to avoid before bed and why:

Coffee

People drink coffee to wake up, feel refreshed and active and come up with great ideas. But the same beverage consumed at late hours of the day delays the onset of sleep. Caffeine remains in our system for 14 hours, which delays the onset of sleep and causes [short sleep duration](#). So, avoid caffeine 4 to 6 hours before bedtime!

Alcohol

Alcohol may help you sleep instantly, but you may frequently wake up at night with night sweats, headaches, or nightmares. According

to [research](#), drinking heavily before bed is associated with short sleep duration, circadian abnormalities, and insomnia. Do you know alcohol before bed can also cause breathing-related sleep problems?.

Sugary and Energy Drinks

A lot of energy drinks are not just rich in calories but contain taurine and caffeine as well. Just like caffeine, taurine - an amino acid also signals your brain to be alert and increases your heart rate, which altogether makes it [difficult for you to fall asleep](#).

Black Tea

A lot of people think black tea or any herbal tea are stress-buster and good for sleep. However, black and some herbal teas also contain caffeine and should be avoided before bed. As per research, beverages rich in caffeine taken 6 hours before bedtime has [disruptive effects on sleep](#).

How Does Your Diet Affect Sleep?

People having a diet low in essential nutrients, vitamins, and minerals that influence the sleep-wake cycle may experience sleep problems. Some of the sleep-regulating nutrients and hormones are listed below so that you can add sleep-inducing foods to your diet.

- Tryptophan
- Serotonin
- Melatonin
- Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid (GABA)
- Magnesium
- Potassium
- Calcium
- Antioxidants
- Vitamin - A, C, D, E, and K

As per research, lack of these nutrients is associated with [sleep problems](#), by affecting [different hormonal pathways](#) in sleep. On the other hand, taking foods that are very high in carbohydrates at night can reduce the amount of [deep sleep](#). This explains why energy drinks and sugar-sweetened beverages are bad for sleep.

Sleep experts recommend taking foods that help you sleep and are rich in above mentioned essential sleep compounds. However, there is a need for in-depth research to claim these benefits.

Is Eating Before Bed Bad?

Well, that depends on what type of food you are eating. Eating foods for [deep sleep](#) right before bed is not a bad idea if they are nutritious and very light. As per research, it is unhealthy to eat foods [rich in salt, sugar, and fat](#) before bed as they are harder to digest. Melatonin-rich foods, high fiber foods, and [a Mediterranean](#) diet will help you fall asleep faster and enhance the quality of sleep. However, if the food is heavy, it is safe to finish your dinner 2-3 hours before bed.

Eating habits affect health differently in each person. For some, eating before bed may result in [weight gain](#) and digestive issues. If you are suffering from any physical illness like obesity that demands a specific type of diet, consult a dietitian before you start munching foods that are good for sleep.

Conclusion

Having poor sleep every night can lead to a range of physical and mental health issues. Having foods that help you sleep at night is a simple remedy for sleep problems. Add food rich in sleep-promoting nutrients and sleep hormones to your diet. Eat healthy and sleep better!

If you have any diet restrictions, please consult your doctor before trying the best foods to have for dinner mentioned in this post.

How Foods May Affect Our Sleep

¹¹A growing body of research suggests that the foods you eat can affect how well you sleep, and your sleep patterns can affect your dietary choices.



Credit...Alex Green



By [Anahad O'Connor](#)

Published Dec. 10, 2020Updated Jan. 1, 2021

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This has not been a very good year for [sleep](#).

With the coronavirus pandemic, school and work disruptions and a contentious election season contributing to countless sleepless nights, sleep experts have [encouraged people](#)

¹¹<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/10/well/eat/sleep-foods-diet.html#:~:text=Researchers%20have%20found%20that%20eating,helping%20to%20promote%20sound%20sleep.>

[to](#) adopt a variety of measures to overcome their stress-related insomnia. Among their recommendations: engage in regular exercise, establish a nightly bedtime routine and cut back on screen time and social media.

But many people may be overlooking another important factor in poor sleep: diet. A growing body of research suggests that the foods you eat can affect how well you sleep, and your sleep patterns can affect your dietary choices.

Researchers have found that eating a diet that is high in sugar, saturated fat and processed carbohydrates can disrupt your sleep, while eating more plants, fiber and foods rich in unsaturated fat — such as nuts, olive oil, fish and avocados — seems to have the opposite effect, helping to promote sound sleep.

Much of what we know about sleep and diet comes from [large epidemiological studies](#) that, over the years, have found that people who suffer from consistently bad sleep tend to have poorer quality diets, with less protein, fewer fruits and vegetables, and a higher intake of added sugar from foods like sugary beverages, desserts and ultra-processed foods. But by their nature, epidemiological studies can show only correlations, not cause and effect. They cannot explain, for example, whether poor diet precedes and leads to poor sleep, or the reverse.

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To get a better understanding of the relationship between diet and sleep, some researchers have turned to randomized controlled trials in which they tell participants what to eat and then look for changes in their sleep. A number of studies have looked at the impact of a diverse array of individual foods, from warm milk to fruit juice. But those studies often have been small and not very rigorous.

Some of these trials have also been funded by the food industry, which can bias results. One [study funded by Zespri International](#), the world's largest marketer of kiwi fruit, for example, found that people assigned to eat two kiwis an hour before their bedtime every night for four weeks had improvements in their sleep onset, duration and efficiency. The authors of the study attributed their findings in part to an "abundance" of antioxidants in kiwis. But importantly, the study lacked a control group, so it is possible that any benefits could have resulted from the placebo effect.

Other [studies funded by the cherry industry](#) have found that drinking tart cherry juice can modestly improve sleep in people with insomnia, supposedly by promoting tryptophan, one of the building blocks of the sleep-regulating hormone melatonin. Tryptophan is an amino acid found in many foods, including dairy and turkey, which is one of the reasons commonly given for why so many of us feel so sleepy after our Thanksgiving feasts. But tryptophan has to cross the blood-brain barrier to have any soporific effects, and in the presence of other amino acids found in food it ends up competing, largely unsuccessfully, for absorption. [Studies show](#) that eating protein-rich

foods such as milk and turkey on their own actually decreases the ability of tryptophan to cross the blood-brain barrier.

One way to enhance tryptophan's uptake is to pair foods that contain it with carbohydrates. That combination stimulates the release of insulin, which causes competing amino acids to be absorbed by muscles, in turn making it easier for tryptophan to cross into the brain, said Marie-Pierre St-Onge, an associate professor of nutritional medicine at Columbia University Irving Medical Center and the director of the Sleep Center of Excellence at Columbia.

Dr. St-Onge has [spent years studying the relationship](#) between diet and sleep. Her work suggests that rather than emphasizing one or two specific foods with supposedly sleep-inducing properties, it is better to focus on the overall quality of your diet. [In one randomized clinical trial](#), she and her colleagues recruited 26 healthy adults and controlled what they ate for four days, providing them regular meals prepared by nutritionists while also monitoring how they slept at night. On the fifth day, the subjects were allowed to eat whatever they wanted.

The researchers discovered that eating more saturated fat and less fiber from foods like vegetables, fruits and whole grains led to reductions in slow-wave sleep, which is the deep, restorative kind. In general, [clinical trials have also found](#) that carbohydrates have a significant impact on sleep: People tend to fall asleep much faster at night when they consume a high-carbohydrate diet compared to when they consume a high-fat or high-protein diet. That may have something to do with carbs helping tryptophan cross into the brain more easily.

But the quality of carbs matters. In fact, they can be a double-edged sword when it comes to slumber. Dr. St-Onge [has found in her research](#) that when people eat more sugar and simple carbs — such as white bread, bagels, pastries and pasta — they wake up more frequently throughout the night. In other words, eating carbs may help you fall asleep faster, but it is best to consume “complex” carbs that contain fiber, which may help you obtain more deep, restorative sleep.

“Complex carbohydrates provide a more stable blood sugar level,” said Dr. St-Onge. “So if blood sugar levels are more stable at night, that could be the reason complex carbohydrates are associated with better sleep.”

One example of a dietary pattern that may be optimal for better sleep is the Mediterranean diet, which emphasizes such foods as vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, legumes, whole grains, seafood, poultry, yogurt, herbs and spices and olive oil. [Large observational studies](#) have found that people who follow this type of dietary pattern are less likely to suffer from insomnia and short sleep, though more research is needed to confirm the correlation.

But the relationship between poor diet and bad sleep is a two-way street: Scientists have found that as people lose sleep, they experience physiological changes that can nudge them to seek out junk food. In clinical trials, healthy adults who are allowed to sleep

only four or five hours a night end up consuming more calories and [snacking more frequently](#) throughout the day. They experience [significantly more hunger](#) and their [preference for sweet foods increases](#).

In men, sleep deprivation [stimulates increased levels of ghrelin](#), the so-called hunger hormone, while in women, restricting sleep leads to lower levels of GLP-1, a hormone that signals satiety.

“So in men, short sleep promotes greater appetite and desire to eat, and in women there is less of a signal that makes you stop eating,” said Dr. St-Onge.

Changes also occur in the brain. Dr. St-Onge found that when men and women were restricted to four hours of nightly sleep for five nights in a row, [they had greater activation in reward centers](#) of the brain in response to pepperoni pizza, doughnuts and candy compared to healthy foods such as carrots, yogurt, oatmeal and fruit. After five nights of normal sleep, however, this pattern of stronger brain responses to the junk food disappeared.

[Another study](#), led by researchers at King’s College London, also demonstrated how proper sleep can increase your willpower to avoid unhealthy foods. It found that habitually short sleepers who went through a program to help them sleep longer — resulting in their getting roughly an hour of additional sleep each night — had improvements in their diet. The most striking change was that they cut about 10 grams of added sugar from their diets each day, the equivalent of about two and a half teaspoons.

The takeaway is that diet and sleep are entwined. Improving one can help you improve the other and vice versa, creating a positive cycle where they perpetuate one another, said Dr. Susan Redline, a senior physician at the Brigham and Women’s Hospital and a professor of sleep medicine at Harvard Medical School who [studies diet and sleep disorders](#).

“The best way to approach health is to emphasize a healthy diet and healthy sleep,” she added. “These are two very important health behaviors that can reinforce each other.”

[Yes, Many of Us Are Stress-Eating and Gaining Weight in the Pandemic](#)

[Dec. 4, 2020](#)

Anahad O’Connor is a staff reporter covering health, science, nutrition and other topics. He is also a bestselling author of consumer health books such as “Never Shower in a Thunderstorm” and “The 10 Things You Need to Eat.”

How Lack of Sleep Affects Junk Food Cravings



BY [KEVIN GRAY](#)

MAY 18, 2022

[NO COMMENTS](#)

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¹²We all know the importance of getting a [good night's sleep](#) regularly, but [according to the CDC](#), 1/3 of adults don't get enough sleep. At least seven hours per night is recommended, as chronic sleep deprivation is associated with an increased risk of developing unhealthy conditions like obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke. But it's not just the body that suffers — too little sleep can also cause mental distress, junk food cravings and poor decision-making. Consider that some of those decisions involve what you eat and drink, and the bodily effects of sleep quality and duration are compounded.

THE LINK BETWEEN SLEEP LOSS AND CRAVINGS

A 2012 [Swedish study](#) published in The Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism looked at the connection between sleep and junk food cravings. They noted sleep deprivation is known to [stimulate appetite and food intake](#), so they hypothesized tired humans are more sensitive to the “rewarding food stimuli” of high-calorie foods. After the study period, they found participants who experienced acute sleep loss (those who were not allowed to sleep as much as the others) reported increased hunger and displayed changes in their brains that showed increased activation in response to food images.

The longer the sleep deprivation lasts, the worse things get. The study results suggested prolonged periods of inadequate sleep lead to a greater reward response in anticipation of food. These changes can drive hedonic impulses to consume unhealthier food and to eat larger quantities than necessary.

The researchers note their findings may highlight a potentially important mechanism that is contributing to the growing levels of obesity in Western society. In other words: We don't sleep enough, and that may be one reason why we're collectively gaining weight.

<https://blog.myfitnesspal.com/how-lack-of-sleep-affects-junk-food-cravings/#:~:text=A%202019%20Northwestern%20University%20study,our%20noses%20are%20to%20blame.> ¹²

AROMAS ARE MORE ENTICING WHEN WE'RE TIRED

A 2019 [Northwestern University study](#) published in the journal eLife looked specifically at why we crave junk food after a night of bad sleep. Like the Swedish study, it noted sleep deprivation impacts food intake and is associated with a preference toward high-calorie options. But it also found our noses are to blame.

According to the researchers, when we're tired, the olfactory system goes into overdrive to identify food. It also changes how it communicates with the brain, which results in our nose steering our decision-making toward more energy-dense options. This may be why we feel more susceptible to enticing aromas when we're tired. Just picture the commercials and cartoons showing people rising from bed, as if on a string, as their noses follow the wafting scents of olfactory delights, like bacon and coffee.

In the study, the scientists noted that individuals who slept less were more likely to [snack throughout the day](#), choosing not only more food but higher-calorie foods.

"We found participants changed their food choices," said the study's senior author, Thorsten Kahnt, an assistant professor of neurology at Northwestern's Feinberg School of Medicine. "After being sleep deprived, they ate food with higher energy density (more calories per gram) like doughnuts, chocolate chip cookies and potato chips."

THE BOTTOM LINE

So, if you want to curb those junk food cravings, start with a good night's sleep. Not only will you make better food choices the next day, but keep it up, and you'll feel less susceptible to the charms of sugary, high-fat foods overall. This can help you stave off weight gain, as well a

Does Junk Food Cause Insomnia? Here's What the Science Says...



by Dale Cudmore | Updated: Jun 28, 2021

¹³You have a fairly late night snack of chips, cookies, or some other junk food, and then you find yourself unable to get to sleep later.

Does that sound familiar?

If it's enough of a routine, these sporadic sleep problems can develop into chronic insomnia, which then causes [many side effects](#).

We're going to look at the different ways that research links junk food consumption with sleep problems.

Table of Contents

1. [Why is Eating Junk Food Causing Insomnia All Of a Sudden?](#)
2. [The Effect of Junk Food on Gut Microbiota](#)
3. [Junk Food, Obesity, and Sleep](#)
4. [Summary: Can Junk Food Cause Sleep Problems?](#)

Why is Eating Junk Food Causing Insomnia All Of a Sudden?

One thing to address right off the start is that even if junk food consumption frequency hasn't changed, it can still contribute to [sudden insomnia](#).

There's a certain level of general "stress" (mental and physical) that we can take while still sleeping well. The negative effects of eating junk food contributes to that stress level.

If you stay below your metaphorical *insomnia threshold*, sleep should be fine. But having **habits like eating junk food puts you close to that threshold**, and one little change can put you over the line.

¹³<https://snoozeuniversity.com/junk-food-insomnia/>

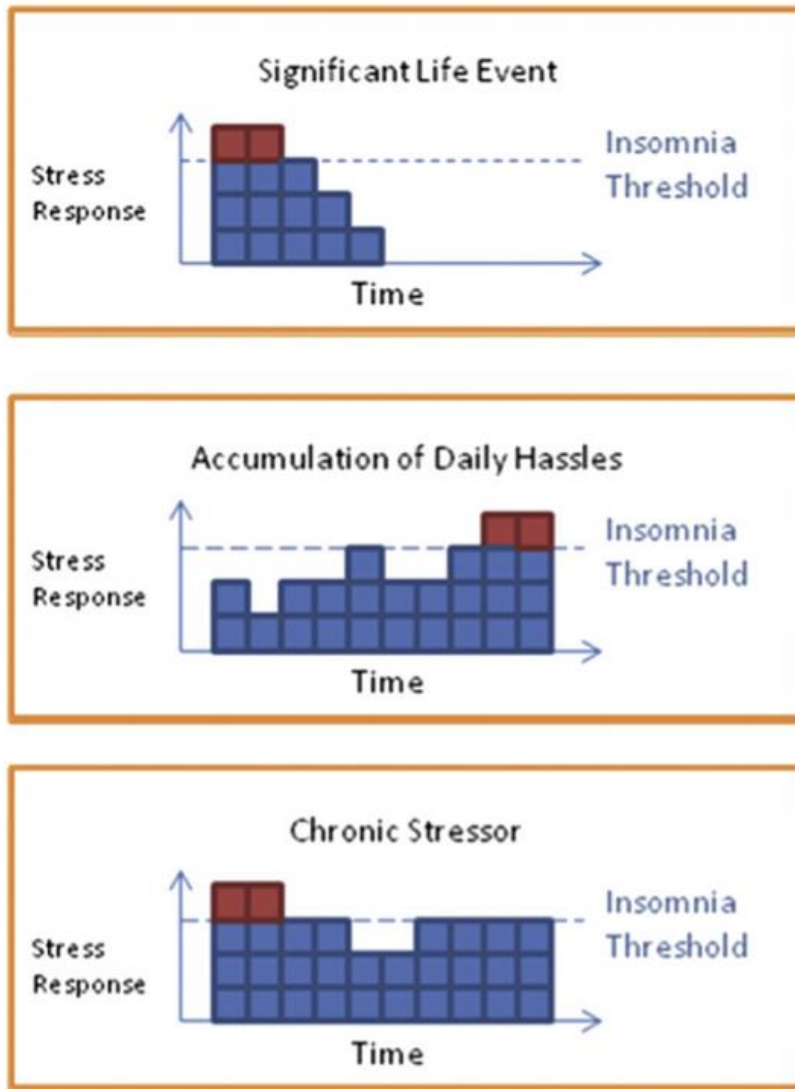


Fig. 1. The influence of different stressors on acute insomnia.

It could be as small as eating junk food a [bit closer to your bedtime](#), a temperature change, or a small extra amount of stress in your life.

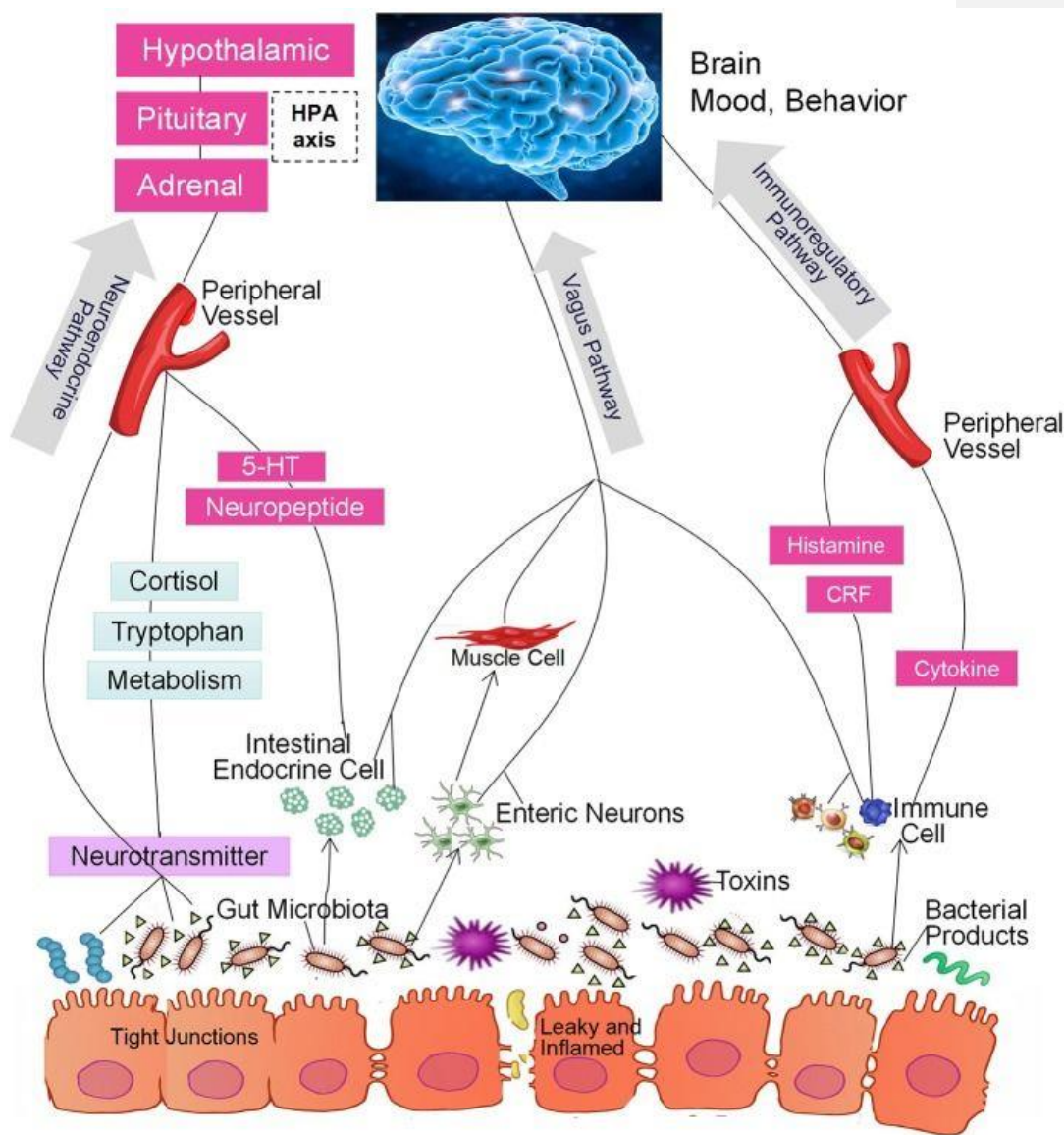
SUMMARY Eating junk food regularly adds to your typical stress levels, which can leave you vulnerable. Even a small change out of your control can make it seem like insomnia came out of nowhere.

The Effect of Junk Food on Gut Microbiota

There's a few different ways that junk food can potentially cause sleep trouble.

The first is that the more junk food you eat, the **more it affects your gut microbiota** (the bacterial environment in your gut) (1).

That may not seem like a big deal, but recent research shows that **the gut can directly affect brain function** through the brain-gut-axis (2).



Having an unhealthy gut can lead to impaired neurotransmitter control. It's the same mechanism that explains how [probiotics can affect sleep](#).

SUMMARY While gut research is still relatively new, it shows that our gut health is connected to our mental health. Our gut health is primarily affected by the quality of the food we eat (among other factors like stress).

Junk Food and Mental Illnesses

Whether it can be solely explained by gut health, several studies have found that **frequently eating junk food is linked to mental illness** (3).

And mental illnesses, particularly depression, are common causes of sleep problems.

In children, one study found that the **children who ate more junk food had later bedtimes and poorer sleep quality** (4).

Another study found (5):

Junk food consumption may increase the risk for psychiatric distress and violent behaviors in children and adolescents

One study looked at the effects of both energy drink consumption and junk food and mental health (6). It found that **both junk food and energy drink consumption resulted in a greater risk of multiple mental health conditions like stress, depressive mood, and sleep dissatisfaction**.

	Frequent energy drinks/frequent junk food (A) (N = 2123)	Frequent energy drinks/infrequent junk food (B) (N = 6084)	Infrequent energy drinks/frequent junk food (C) (N = 7746)	Infrequent energy drinks/infrequent junk food (D) (N = 52090)
	%	%	%	%
Sleep dissatisfaction	47.9	43.0	43.7	36.9
Perceived stress	45.6	42.2	38.8	33.7
Persistent depressive mood	41.7	29.6	28.2	21.4

The subjects most at risk were those who consumed both junk food and energy drinks regularly.

Finally, **food addiction also comes with an increased risk of poor sleep quality (7).**

Junk Food, Obesity, and Sleep

Obesity is one of the biggest [risk factors for insomnia](#).

Obviously you can eat junk food without being overweight or obese, but if you develop any weight issues, it's raises your chances of having sleep issues (8).

Sugar and Insomnia

Not only does sugar make it easier to gain weight, there's evidence that [sugar can cause insomnia](#) in some cases.

Several studies have found that **poor sleep quality is directly linked to the amount of sugar consumed**, particularly in [students with insomnia](#) (9, 10).

Sugar increases insulin resistance, and research shows that insulin resistance contributes to short sleep duration and insomnia (11).

SUMMARY Frequent junk food consumption has side effects like inflammation, insulin resistance, and weight gain; all of those can cause sleep issues.

Summary: Can Junk Food Cause Sleep Problems?

There's a lot of research showing that long term junk food consumption comes with a higher risk of sleep issues and insomnia. If you want to [sleep well you'll need to eat healthy](#), at least somewhat healthy.

Other than eating a large amount of sugar or fat before bed, sleep troubles are typically not caused by one-off junk food snack.

The tolls that junk food takes on your physical and mental health only become clear over a longer time period.

However, keep in mind that correlation does not equal causation. Someone might start having sleep issues and associate them incorrectly with eating certain junk food. There are many other possible [causes of insomnia](#) that should also be ruled out.

References

1. [Adherence to the Mediterranean diet is associated with the gut microbiota pattern and gastrointestinal characteristics in an adult population](#)
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3. [Junk Food Consumption and Symptoms of Mental Health Problems](#)
4. [Associations between self-reported sleep measures and dietary behaviours in a large sample of Australian school students](#)
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8. [Childhood obesity, prevalence and prevention](#)
9. [Relationship Between Added Sugar Intake and Sleep Quality Among University Students: A Cross-sectional Study](#)
10. [Sleep duration and consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages and energy drinks among adolescents](#)
11. [Sleep disturbances and insulin resistance](#)

What to Do Before Bed: A Guide to Optimize Your Sleep

** Verified by a US-based board-certified doctor.*

If you regularly don't get the proper amount of sleep, it can throw off everything in your brain. You can have **higher levels of stress**, and it can be harder to concentrate throughout the day.

There are so many distractions in the world, and we are so used to **multitasking** that we constantly force ourselves to go beyond our limits without even noticing.

If you struggle with difficulty **falling asleep or staying asleep**, there are a handful of amazing [natural remedies](#) for sleep to explore! They are easier than you think, and they will help you wake up energized every single morning!

Reduce Blue Light

A significant contributor to getting the proper amount of sleep is light exposure. Increasing your exposure to sunlight or bright lights during the day keeps your **circadian rhythm** in check and is beneficial to your sleeping habits.

However, having too much [exposure to the light](#) coming from screens can negatively impact your sleep. Screens, like TV's and cell phones, give off **blue light**. At night, this

¹⁴ https://magicmind.co/blogs/news/what-to-do-before-bed?nbt=nb%3Aadwords%3A%3A19098861488%3A144819124980%3A638394855298&nb_adtype=&nb_kwd=&nb_ti=dsa-64024807612&nb_mi=&nb_pc=&nb_pi=&nb_ppi=&nb_placement=&nb_si={sourceid}&nb_li_ms=&nb_lp_ms=&nb_fii=&nb_ap=&nb_mt=&gclid=CjwKCAiA3KefBhByEiwAi2LDHLM34xVLsgJDxaT14vJU205tYRzcuBMGyQuMuDLQSFMO_QAOAJs3QBoC0S8QAvD_BwE

blue light affects your circadian rhythm by making your brain believe you are absorbing daylight.

Absorbing this light leads to a **decrease in your brain's melatonin production**, therefore making it more difficult for you to fall asleep.

One good way to avoid blue light late is to switch your screens to have a **blue light filter**. That way, you will absorb less blue light and have a much more restful night's sleep!

Drink Less Caffeine

Let's be honest; there's no way most of us can give up caffeine! It's what starts, and keeps us going on our busiest days! Drinking a cup of coffee or caffeinated tea can give you that **boost** you need to be at your best!

However, when it comes to getting a great night's sleep, there is a pretty clear window in which you should **consume caffeine**. Consuming too much caffeine can **harm your sleep pattern**.

It's been reported that caffeine stays active inside the body for about 6 to 8 hours. For the best possible sleep, **try not to have caffeine 6 to 8 hours before bed**. Your safest bet would be not to have it after 4 pm. Feel free to consume decaffeinated teas and coffee, if you have a craving!

Have you ever thought of having a drink alongside your morning coffee that will extend its effects? Try out this [morning drink](#)!

Have a Consistent Routine

Consistency is vital in so many aspects of life. The most important thing to keep consistent is your sleep! Your brain likes patterns, so creating a **healthy sleep** pattern will increase your sleep quality over time.

It can be a difficult practice to wake up and fall asleep at the same time every day. With differing work schedules and social schedules, maintaining that consistency all week will take some work.

It is worth the effort, though. Studies have shown that **inconsistent sleep routines** can lead to a **lack of your body's melatonin production!**

So, if possible, create a sleep schedule that is **appropriate for your lifestyle** and stick to it! Your body will thank you.



Do you want to do more with less stress?

We're the world's first productivity drink designed to stimulate energy and focus, while decreasing stress, oxidation, and inflammation in the body. Check out Magic Mind today.

Subscribe

Exercise Regularly

Speaking of consistency, having a **regular exercise schedule** can be essential to those who have difficulty sleeping.

[Exercise](#) has been proven to **significantly impact sleep quality**, making it one of the best natural remedies for sleep! Studies have shown that exercising regularly can reduce time to fall asleep by half and increase total sleep time by nearly 18%!

One rule to follow is to try to complete your exercises while the **sun is still up**. While there is no proof that it's incredibly disruptive to sleep, exercise increases adrenaline and epinephrine levels. These two chemicals are [stimulants](#), so having those taper off for a few hours before bedtime is beneficial.

Take Time to Relax

Taking the time to wind down in the evening is an essential natural remedy for sleep. If falling asleep often gives you trouble, try to find a way to calm your mind and body before heading to bed.

People find success in calming their mind by **meditating or receiving a relaxing massage**. You can also put on **relaxing music** or focus on reading a book. These are great ways for your body to fall into a relaxed state and aid your sleep quality!

You may even want to consider **taking a hot shower or bath**! Particularly in older people having a hot shower or bath about an hour before bed can help you fall into a deeper and more restful night's sleep!



Put Down Your Phone

I know, **putting down your cell phone** today is a hard feat! We are in constant communication, and there is endless information at our fingertips!

As we discussed earlier, cell phone screens produce **blue light** that can mess with your body's circadian rhythm. That's one of the most essential reasons to put away your phone.

Not looking at your phone is just the first step. It is highly suggested that whenever possible, you put your phone on **silent or airplane mode**, so it does not disturb you as you try to relax and fall asleep. Being pulled out of falling asleep can have **adverse effects on your sleep quality**.

In some situations, it isn't possible to have your phone off, especially in case of emergencies. However, if possible, **reducing the number of distractions** and disruptions to your sleep is important for those who struggle with getting restful sleep.

Be Wary of Long Naps

Did you know that having a short nap during the day is part of your **circadian rhythm**? Humans naturally lose a bit of energy during the mid-afternoon hours. It can be extremely beneficial (if you have the opportunity) to take a **power nap**!

Taking a [mid-day siesta](#) that lasts about **20 minutes** can increase alertness and productivity! While this practice is a great way to get energy mid-day and keep your body in its natural rhythm, there are a few things to watch out for.

Sleeping too long will put you into a deep sleep, which can have the **opposite effect** as a light nap. It can result in you being more groggy and tired than before. Also, you will want to make sure you nap right around lunchtime. Taking a late nap can make you less tired at night and create more difficulty falling asleep.

Make Your Bedroom Comfortable

Set the mood when you are ready to fall asleep. Too much **light and noise pollution** in the bedroom can make relaxing challenging, and diminish sleep quality.

Make sure there aren't too many lights in the bedroom coming from **alarm clocks** or various other lights. You also want to make sure your bedroom is an **environment of comfort**. Having too much clutter can be subliminally irritating and can cause sleep problems.

You want your bedroom to be a space that you find comforting and relaxing. That is going to make this one **powerful remedy** for a good night's sleep.

Optimize Your Productivity With Better Sleep

Better sleep means better productivity. Having a restful night's sleep can lead to a cycle of more productivity, less stress, and more energy to do the things you love. Having natural energy that doesn't lead to a mid-day crash can truly improve your **quality of life**.

The **vitamins in natural energy sources** can have benefits in not only energy, but also mood, focus, and can decrease your stress levels!

Magic Mind is a productivity energy drink that helps you stay focused without heavy sugars and harmful chemicals.

If you want to learn more about how Magic Mind's product can help you stress less and sleep better, click [here](#)!



Final Thoughts

Making changes to your routine and what you consume are fantastic **natural remedies** for sleep. From changing when you exercise to changing when you look at your phone, these **simple adjustments** can make a world of difference.

Also, watching what you consume can have significant benefits on **sleep and daytime productivity!** Remember to be mindful of what works for you and what changes you can make to give yourself the best night's sleep you've ever had.

RELATED ARTICLES

When Is the Best Time To Go to Sleep?

Research suggests that we should be snoozing by 10 p.m.

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¹⁵As the sun sets each day and it gets dark outside, you should ideally be winding down to go to sleep. But bingeing that TV show or scrolling through social media keeps you [up past midnight](#) instead of hitting the hay at a decent hour.

A [recent study](#) suggests that going to sleep at 10 p.m. is the optimal time. But is there any truth to that?

¹⁵ <https://health.clevelandclinic.org/what-time-should-i-go-to-bed/#:~:text=1%20%2F%2020-20When%20is%20the%20Best%20Time%20To%20Go%20to%20Sleep%3F,comes%20to%20hitting%20the%20hay.>

We ask sleep disorders expert [Colleen Lance, MD](#), who discusses if timing matters and offers tips for getting better sleep.

Does timing matter?

The study, which was conducted in the United Kingdom, used data from 88,000 adults to determine that 10 p.m. is the ideal hour to go to bed.

Not so fast, says Dr. Lance.

"There's not a magic number that someone has to adhere to," she says. "It has to do with what your personal need is and everyone has a different need."

So, while 10 p.m. may be ideal for some, it won't work well for others. Instead of focusing on the digits on your alarm clock, Dr. Lance says [consistency](#) should be your goal.

That means going to sleep at the same time every night (even if it's 10 p.m.) and waking up at the same time every morning. Even eating dinner at the same time every day can help you fall asleep. All that consistency helps us function better.

Why? It has to do with our [circadian rhythm](#), an internal clock that's inside of your body that regulates sleep.

"As the sun goes down, your brain perceives through the lack of light that it's time to go to sleep," explains Dr. Lance. "And it triggers a secretion of melatonin. It's that tiny little burst of melatonin that triggers other neurochemicals to start the process to get you ready to go to sleep in a few hours."

We also have these internal clocks for our hormones, immune system and digestion.

"If another schedule is off track, you get your body's clocks all misaligned," says Dr. Lance. "For instance, if you wait till 10 p.m. to eat dinner, then who knows when you're going to go to sleep because your circadian rhythm is off."

And having an inconsistent sleep cycle can lead to an increased risk for obesity and diabetes.

How many hours of sleep should you get?

It's recommended that adults get between 7 and 9 hours of sleep per night. But Dr. Lance suggests finding the [total amount of sleep](#) that works for you. So, 7-1/2 hours might work for you while your partner may need 9 hours.

"If you're somewhere within that range, and you feel good during the day, that's the most important factor," she says.

In an ideal night, one would cycle through the various stages of sleep five to six times. Each cycle contains four individual stages: three that form non-rapid eye movement (NREM) sleep and one rapid eye movement (REM) sleep.

"REM sleep is when your brain catches up on its rest," says Dr. Lance. "If you don't get enough REM sleep, you may start having problems with memory, mood and concentration."

Sleep tips

If you're having trouble going to sleep at the same time every night, Dr. Lance offers up the following advice.

- **Aim to eat dinner at the same time every night.** Picking a time and then trying to stick with it can help reset your sleep-wake cycle. And avoid eating any snacks two hours before bed.
- **Take a small dose of melatonin.** Use instant-release supplements as opposed to one that's extended release, which dissolves slowly. "It's just a little pow — just what your brain is supposed to be doing as the sun goes down to help reset that clock," she says.
- **Use a sleep diary.** Dr. Lance says keeping track of your sleep can help you and your doctor determine patterns and if you're getting enough sleep.
- **Eliminate naps.** This doesn't mean naps are bad, but if you're having trouble falling asleep at night, then this might be the culprit. "When you first wake up in the morning, your drive to fall asleep should be at its absolute lowest and it slowly climbs throughout the day," Dr. Lance explains. "It should be at its absolute highest in the evening. However, if you take a nap at any point, then it completely obliterates your drive to go back to sleep and you're starting over from ground zero."
- **Minimize alcohol or caffeine in the evening.** Contrary to popular belief, alcohol doesn't help you fall asleep. It may at first, but then it'll disrupt your sleep later in the night.

In the end, trying to have a little consistency in your bedtime routine can help you get some quality sleep. So switch off your phone, stop the late-night snacks and focus on having a schedule when it comes to sleep. It's critical to maintaining your health.

Think of it this way, advises Dr. Lance, your kids have a set bedtime and routine. As adults, we tend to forget the benefits of a reliable regimen, but we put those routines in place for a reason.

"We all know what happens when you let your kids run wild and stay up however late they want," says Dr. Lance. "It's hell the next day."

same time every morning—weekdays or weekends. It's fine to sleep an extra hour on your days off. But if you're getting up at 6:30 during the workweek and sleeping until 10 on weekends, you're going to throw off your sleep rhythms and make bedtime more challenging, she says.

Exp

What's the Best Time to Sleep?



Illustration by Peter Oumanski for TIME

BY MARKHAM HEID

AUGUST 27, 2014 6:00 AM EDT

¹⁶*Every hour of sleep before midnight is worth two after midnight.* Your grandparents (and great grandparents) probably adhered to that creaky adage. “The mythology is unfortunate, because there’s no pumpkin-like magic that occurs,” says Dr. Matt Walker, head of the Sleep and Neuroimaging Lab at the University of California, Berkeley. And while nothing special happens to you or the quality of your sleep at the stroke of midnight, many do wonder: What’s the best time to go to bed?

5 Genius Sleeping Products

¹⁶ <https://time.com/3183183/best-time-to-sleep/>

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Walker says your sleep quality does change as the night wears on. “The time of night when you sleep makes a significant difference in terms of the structure and quality of your sleep,” he explains. Your slumber is composed of a series of 90-minute cycles during which your brain moves from deep, non-rapid eye movement (non-REM) sleep to REM sleep. “That 90-minute cycle is fairly stable throughout the night,” Walker explains. “But the ratio of non-REM to REM sleep changes.”

Watch More

He says that non-REM sleep tends to dominate your slumber cycles in the early part of the night. But as the clock creeps toward daybreak, REM sleep muscles in. That’s significant, because some research has suggested that non-REM sleep is deeper and more restorative than lighter, dream-infused REM sleep—though Walker says both offer important benefits.

What does this have to do with the perfect bedtime? The shift from non-REM to REM sleep happens at certain times of the night regardless of when you go to bed, Walker says. So if you hit the sack very late—at, say, 3 AM—your sleep will tilt toward lighter, REM-heavy sleep. And that reduction in deep, restorative sleep may leave you groggy and blunt-minded the next day.

That’s unfortunate news for nightshift workers, bartenders and others with unconventional sleep-wake routines, because they can’t sleep efficiently at odd hours of the day or night, Walker says. Shift work has been linked to obesity, heart attack, a [higher rate of early death](#) and even [lower brain power](#). In one study, people who had experience working at night had lower

scores on standardized tests of memory and processing speed than those who hadn't—and people who had a decade or more of shift work experience had such pronounced cognitive deficits that they equaled about 6.5 years of cognitive decline. Even shortened sleep has an effect, [one recent study found](#). People who slept for five hours a night for just a week had a higher heart rate during the day. “The idea that you can learn to work at night and sleep during the day—you just can't do that and be at your best.” Your brain and body's circadian rhythms—which regulate everything from your sleeping patterns to your energy and hunger levels—tell your brain what kind of slumber to crave. And no matter how hard you try to reset or reschedule your circadian rhythms when it comes to bedtime, there's just not much wiggle room. “These cycles have been established for hundreds of thousands of years,” Walker explains. “Thirty or 40 years of professional life aren't going to change them.”

You don't have to be a shift worker to feel this

When it comes to bedtime, he says there's a window of several hours—roughly between 8 PM and 12 AM—during which your brain and body have the opportunity to get all the non-REM and REM shuteye they need to function optimally. And, believe it or not, your genetic makeup dictates whether you're more comfortable going to bed earlier or later within that rough 8-to-midnight window, says Dr. Allison Siebern, associate director of the Insomnia & Behavioral Sleep Medicine Program at Stanford University.

“For people who are night owls, going to bed very early goes against their physiology,” Siebern explains. The same is true for “morning larks” who try to stay up late. For either type of person—as well as for the vast majority of sleepers who fall somewhere in between—the best bedtime is the hour of the evening when they feel most sleepy.

That means night owls shouldn't try to force themselves to bed at 9 or 10 if they're not tired. Of course, your work schedule or family life may dictate when you have to get up in the morning. But if you can find a way to match your sleep schedule to your biology—and get a full eight hours of Z's—you'll be better off, she adds.

Both she and Walker say your ideal bedtime will also change as you age. While small children tend to be most tired early in the evening, the opposite is true for college-aged adults who may be more comfortable going to bed around or after midnight. Beyond college, your best bedtime will likely creep earlier and earlier as you age, Walker says. And again, all of this is set by your biology.

Siebern suggests experimenting with different bedtimes and using sleepiness as your barometer for a best fit. Just make sure you're rising at roughly the same time every morning—weekdays or weekends. It's fine to sleep an extra hour on your days off. But if you're getting up at 6:30 during the workweek and sleeping until 10 on weekends, you're going to throw off your sleep rhythms and make bedtime more challenging, she says.

Closing

My motto is the more attention you pay to something, the more attention it pays to you.

I find this quite true in my life. The more I see the miracle in life, the more miracles show up to me.

We live at times such mundane lives. The signposts of God are all around us. Just think every time you sleep at night you go home to your creator.

Yet we think this process is mundane. We would rather do something else like going on Facebook and seeing what's going on.

If you got any message or meaning from this book, it would be to open up your eyes and see that life is a Miracle.

If you see sleeping as a hassle, you will see that life is a hassle.

If you think that eating good food is a hassle then your body will someday rebel against you.

If you don't see the point to monitor your thoughts and actions you are like leaves blowing in the wind.

Curve balls will always be thrown your way. Proper sleep is a way to go back to the center of the hurricane and rest and restore from the traumas that you had during the day.

Something so natural and built-in yet we think it's a hassle.

No wonder the world is in such chaos today.