

Dr Jones and I read a wonderful discussion about sleep in Wikipedia.

By Marilyn Sidwell

Did you ever notice that all animals sleep? Did you know that hibernation and coma are not states of sleep? Birds and some other animals sleep while one brain lobe stays awake. Babies spend much of their time sleeping - and as we age the amount of time spent sleeping varies. I have often said that if you can sleep - you need to. It seems that a lot of mental and physical 'housecleaning' takes place during our time asleep. For instance, there is a relationship between sleep and your immune functions. During sleep you have altered perceptions, too. One interesting observation was that many times a person reported getting only 4 hours of sleep, when in reality they slept for 8 hours. That is not to say it was a restful or productive sleep.

We summarized this information from The Harvard Women's Health Watch, which gives six reasons you should get enough sleep:

1. Learning and Memory: Studies showed that people who'd slept after learning a task did better on tests later.
2. Metabolism and weight: Chronic sleep deprivation affects the way our bodies process and store carbohydrates.
3. Safety: Sleep debt may lead to falls and mistakes such as medical errors, air traffic mishaps, and road accidents.
4. Mood: Sleep loss may result in irritability, impatience, inability to concentrate, and moodiness. (as if you didn't know)
5. Cardiovascular health: Serious sleep disorders have been linked to hypertension, increased stress hormone levels, and irregular heartbeat. (I thought this was a powerful link)
6. Disease: Sleep deprivation alters immune function.

I am sure you know what happens in your life when you don't get enough sleep. The issue then is 'How can you sleep better?' You can find a number of 'sleep hygiene' suggestions on the web - what to do or not to do in the hours before bedtime. The bedroom should be held sacred for just sleep (or other relaxing activities). A warm soaking bath is one of the recommendations to ease away the day's tensions. The addition of Nite-Cap mineral bath crystals with the soothing essential oils of lavender and chamomile blue makes your bath a real treat. Rock-A-Bye Baby oil is often used to help soothe a restless baby.

There are a number of Nutritional sleep possibilities:

hGh (human Growth hormone)

Measurements have found that the largest and most predictable level of growth hormone occurs about 1 hour after onset of sleep. It was postulated this is because the body needs the support of hGh so it can perform its nighttime maintenance. For years Dr. Jones has recommended 2 grams of Opti Arginine (an hGh stimulator) at bedtime for a good night's sleep.

Daily surges of hGh occur at 3-5 hr intervals. For folks who have trouble in the morning, Dr. Jones recommends 2 grams of Opti Arginine. If you are dragging in the afternoon, try 2 grams of Opti Arginine. Few people need this pick-me-up multiple times during the day, but most of us do need higher levels of this hGh precursor as we age. hGh levels are also affected by the amount of exercise you get, your eating habits and general nutritional status, and your sleep habits. Ps. there are a number of amino acids which help your body make hGh, but Arginine seems to have the most effect, followed closely by Lysine. You can use Lysine if you have a problem with herpes (Arginine stimulates the activity of this virus), or some people have good success by using both amino acids together.

Pain

One of the recurrent problems relating to poor sleep had to do with pain (even very low levels of pain). This was closely related to stress and anxiety. Very often a study subject would fall asleep easily, then awaken later and be unable to go back to sleep.

An example of a pain related awakening is restless legs syndrome. One study evaluated vitamin D levels for patients with this syndrome. It was postulated that one cause of disturbed sleep might be chronic pain - and low vitamin D levels are associated with chronic pain.

We have a number of very effective products for pain relief.

1. Opti-PUFA is highly recommended for Arthritis, all Inflammatory problems and Heart Health
2. Magnesium Many people fall asleep easily, but something (maybe a need to use the bathroom) wakes them up. Our 250 mg Ultra Magnesium Plus can help you resume sleep.
3. Yucca is a fast-acting solution for pain that wakes you up at night
4. MSM Lotion and Capsules have a long record of being effective for relief of pain.
5. NutriFlow or Ultra Cal Mag Chelate can help tame your Restless Legs if they wake you up at night
6. We have several Vitamin D products - and 1000 IU in our adult multi vitamin and mineral formulations

We also recommend a number of **Nutritional Alternatives** to common sleep medications:

50 mg or 100 mg 5HTP plus Passionflower (Tranquility) - do not use with SSRI drugs

Tranquility synergies (for stress relief),

Sweet Marjoram EO, (among its many other benefits, it helps promote sleep)

PhytoCalm (it's easy to relax the tension away)

RestEasy (Try it for a better night's sleep)

St Johnswort (has similar efficacy to standard anti depressant treatment)

or Serenity (St Johnswort plus Valerian root with sedative properties)

We have a number of Nite Cap Essential Oil blends that could help you get back to sleep if you wake up at night. The Nite Cap Synergy roll-on would be handy at your bed side, as would the Nite Cap body balm. They both contain the essential oils Lavender and Chamomile blue, which are well known for their soothing properties.

High levels of the b-Vitamins, such as you will find in our multi formulas and/or Choline Inositol work on your neurotransmitters - which affects your sleep and your brain function.

Ultra Adrenal has a number of nutrients which help brain function Ultra Adrenal Complex can also combat chronic fatigue and reduce anxiety.

Eating

We found reference to a study evaluating how 4 different diets affected sleep. We found nothing to alter our opinion that the Low Carbohydrate Lifestyle Modification is the most effective for this and many other health conditions. A diet high in fresh fruits and vegetables also comes highly recommended. There was also a reference to bedtime snacks - specifically, you should not eat sweets or other foods high in simple carbohydrates just before bed. And for sure, do not have a heavy meal in close proximity to bedtime.

Happy Dreams!



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