

Sleep Resources

Are you dragging? Tired? Limping?

A single commitment might very well turn the tide. Watch this 4 ½ minute [TED-Ed video](#). It might be the best 270-second investment of your entire week.

<https://valleysleepcenter.com/what-happens-to-your-brain-when-you-dont-get-enough-sleep/>

Sleep does more than we can imagine.

Points to ponder on sleeping better.

Sleep and trauma

Stress from a traumatic event can often lead to a variety of sleep problems. When the body is overstimulated, the brain is flooded with neurochemicals such as epinephrine and adrenaline that keep us awake, making it difficult to wind down at the end of the day. The neurochemicals remain present in the brain and can interrupt your normal sleep cycle. The result can be insomnia, bad dreams, and daytime fatigue caused by sleep disturbances. Check out this site for more information: <https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/trauma-and-sleep>

Water overload

We are so often advised to drink water that we rarely ask ourselves if we need to drink that much. If you're a healthy individual, and drinking about 8 cups a day, you can't be dehydrated, unless you're trekking through a desert for 10 hours without a break. We all know that water is vital to health and all the bodily functions. If we're dehydrated, we feel sluggish, tired, and our body has difficulties getting rid of toxins and waste products. So naturally it's easy to overlook the problems occurring with overhydration, since people hardly believe this is possible.

You must not underestimate the consequences of overhydration (drinking too much water), as it will throw off balance all the functions in the body. The main concern is that the balance between the water and sodium content in the blood stream is very delicate. If you're drinking too much water the sodium content in the blood will get diluted since the ratio between water and sodium will be far more in favor of the water.

If overhydrated, your respiration rate while sleeping can be 3-4 times the normal rate, much like a panting dog, in an attempt to rid your body of the excess water. Rapid respirations are not conducive to falling asleep! Reducing water consumption can dramatically reduce the rate of night-time respirations ... and make it much easier to fall asleep. Want more information on hydration? Check out this site: <https://survival-mastery.com/med/health/overhydration.html>

Babies and Children

If you are serious about sleep, don't have children. Just kidding! But really, these critters are criminal when it comes to setting us up for sleep deprivation. Besides tag-teaming (with another adult in your home), here are three suggestions.

- Go to bed as early as you can. Give yourself a bedtime. (Based on our circadian rhythms, our most restorative sleep happens between 10 PM and 5 AM, no matter what time we go to bed (best sleep happens before midnight).
- Explore the power of napping – 20-minute power naps or 90-minute restorative naps. Check out what Napoleon, Edison and Churchill had in common when it comes to napping! <https://www.artofmanliness.com/articles/the-napping-habits-of-8-famous-men/>
- Trust God and pray, "Lord, multiply my sleep. I'm hanging on by a wing and a prayer."

Tired, but wired

Living in overload, with no margin and little breathing room, our engines are revving non-stop throughout most days. This "go, go, go" sets us up for an overabundance of cortisol coursing through our veins. Too much cortisol makes it hard to go to sleep at night, setting us up for a short night of shut-eye. When we do not get 7-8 hours of sleep at night, our bodies pump out extra cortisol the next day in an attempt to counter-act the drag we feel, having gotten too little sleep. The cycle is destructive over the long-haul, and not an easy fix. Three things have been helpful for me.

- **L-Theanine.** Give it a try! It's an amino acid derived from tea leaves. It is calming, but not sedating. Try taking 50-100 mg. during the day when you feel your body's reaction to stress rising. Try 100-200 mg. an hour before bed.
- **Deep Breathing** is known to reduce the level of cortisol in our bodies. Getting into the habit of one-minute deep breathing breaks throughout the day can put a healthy dent into cortisol overload. It's a great way to start and end your day, as well. Find out more about this topic at: <https://sites.google.com/site/stanleyguansite/health/health-tips/breathe-deeply-to-activate-vagus-nerve>
- **Get Outside.** Sit outside for 5 minutes a day. It can do wonders. A 10-minute walk each day, too, can be calming and restorative. Being proactive takes intent. Forming a new habit is hard, but the rewards can add hours to our sleep and years to our life. Interested in more information? Click here: <https://>

www.outsideonline.com/1870381/take-two-hours-pine-forest-and-call-me-morning

2 a.m. – 4 a.m. wake ups

Are you waking up – wide awake – every night between the hours of 2 a.m. and 4 a.m.? Here is an article that suggests eating some protein before going to bed can help you sleep all night. Try adding some nuts, whole-wheat crackers and cheese, peanut butter and apple slices to your bedtime routine. Find article here: <https://universityhealthnews.com/daily/natural-health-advisory-has-a-new-home-welcome-to-university-health-news/>

Blue light blocking glasses

Some people's brains are more reactive to the blue wave light coming at us via indoor lighting. Blue wave light, in some people, reduces their body's ability to produce the melatonin they need to prepare their body to move into a restorative sleep at the end of the day. Orange tinted glasses can help with this. Our Founder, Brenda Jank, has tried these and they work! Find out more here: <https://wellnessmama.com/15730/blue-light-blocking-glasses/>

Aches and pains

Inflammation plays a role in the aches and pains of joints and muscles. If nighttime achiness hinders your sleep, you might want to explore the possibility of inflammation. Adding turmeric can help decrease inflammation. Unfortunately, the food that we eat can set us up for pain. For some people dairy increases inflammation levels in the body, causing knees (and other joints) to ache considerably. If interested, you could try eliminating a certain food product from your diet for a few weeks: gluten, dairy, sugar, eggs, corn are heavy hitters. Do one at a time. As you add it back in, it's easy to tell if aches and pains increase. It requires some forethought and work, but it has made a difference in my life. Explore more of this topic here: <https://www.cnn.com/2012/07/20/health/food-cause-pain-daniluk/>

Beta Blockers

It is important to be aware of how medications could impact sleep. Beta blockers can cause problems if taken at bed time. Click here to find out more information: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/high-blood-pressure/in-depth/beta-blockers/art-20044522?pg=2>.

Serotonin levels

Individuals can have low serotonin levels that affect sleep. If you suffer from depression you may understand that. However, even people who do not struggle with depression can have low serotonin levels. If our body is low in serotonin, it cannot produce enough melatonin at night to foster an easy transition into sleep. Doctors are now prescribing a low dose of a serotonin modulator, Trazadone, to be taken at bed time, to foster good

sleep. Click here for more information: <https://www.consumerreports.org/insomnia/trazodone-for-insomnia-should-you-take/>.

Potpourri of supplements and medication

Here are a few additional things to consider.

- **Magnesium.** Many people are deficient and are finding that supplementing with this mineral helps them make great gains in the arena of sleep. Take note. Most of what is sold out there is Magnesium Oxide. Don't waste your money. Your body can't absorb this form. Go after Magnesium Glycinate or Magnesium Citrate.
- **Benadryl** induces sleep, and can be a helpful sleep aid, but it should not be used on a regular basis. It creates brainwave patterns that do not foster a restorative night's sleep long term. Be aware!
- **Melatonin** can be helpful at times, for some people. Continue to explore this topic here: <https://sciencebasedmedicine.org/melatonin-for-sleep-disorders-safe-and-effective/>
- **Tart Cherry Juice** is something new. It is worth checking out if you have trouble falling asleep. Explore this topic more at: <https://valleysleepcenter.com/the-truth-about-tart-cherry-juice-and-sleep/>
- **Ambien** (and other prescription sleep medications). Do what you need to do to get sleep. For those with sleep issues, morning comes with extreme fatigue and aching muscles. Even if you are in bed for 12 hours, some do not get into the deeper stages of sleep where the body can do its repair work. Ambien or another sleep assistance medication can be helpful. Sleep is critical. Be honest with your doctor. Explore this short-term solution for times of sleep crisis. Don't be afraid. Prescription medication may not be right for you, but it might be the right thing, at the right time, to break a cycle of insomnia that is unraveling your life. More information can be found at: <https://healthfully.com/155363-sleep-muscle-recovery.html>

Surprisingly effective sleep tips

- **Socks.** Wear socks to bed if you are cold! Find more information at: <https://www.sleep.org/articles/wearing-socks-to-bed/>
- **Bedroom Boundaries.** Keep children, pets and cell phones out of your bedroom.
- **Caffeine.** Don't drink anything after 2:00 p.m. – 6 p.m. When do you need to stop for the day?
- **Sleep Apnea.** If there is any amount of breathing noise or excessive day-time sleepiness and fatigue, don't miss looking into the possibility of sleep apnea.
- **Set a bedtime.** To make sleep a priority AND to get your body in a pattern of sleeping.