Healthy Sleep Habitzzz

Dr. Chandra Villano, ND
Sleep Debt

Like credit card debt

⇒ the more you owe, the longer it can take to pay off

- Memory of exhaustion
- New cells need to regenerate
Stages of Sleep

- NREM Sleep (non-REM) + REM Sleep
- NREM/REM cycles - 90 min, ~ 5/night
- Sleep & circadian rhythms tightly linked
- Medical evidence suggests that for optimum health and function, the average adult should get 7-9 hours of sleep daily
Sleep Function

ACTIVE, not passive

- Deep sleep
  - Repair, rejuvenate- organs, tissues, bones
  - Growth hormone- “anti-aging”
    - Liver cleansing, muscle building, break down of fat stores, normalization of blood sugar
- REM
  - Emotions, memory processed
Circadian Clock
“DIURNAL RHYTHM”

- Sleep/wake cycle; Night/day
- Regulates all body functions: including body temperature, blood pressure, digestive enzymes, hormones
- Melatonin (dark), Cortisol, Adenosine
- Adrenal stress symptoms: difficulty falling asleep, trouble staying asleep, wake up fatigued

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Sleep Deprivation

- ↑ adrenal stress
- ↑ pain
- ↑ fatigue
- ↓ decision making abilities
- Slow reaction time, drowsy, absentminded, impaired memory, ↓ stress tolerance

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Sleep Deprivation

- ↑ ghrelin (appetite-stimulating)
- Slows leptin (satiety hormone)
- Research links: obesity, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, depression, life expectancy
Healthy Sleep Habits = Sleep Hygiene

Eliminate causes
Preventive measures
Eliminate & Prevent

- Inconsistent bed time & routine
- Consistent sleep/wake "routine conditioning"
- Slow down habits: give permission to leave chores/work for next day, brush teeth, calm music, dim light, warm shower or Epsom salt bath
Eliminate & Prevent

- Stress! (acute or chronic)
  - Create balance, positive outlet; REGULAR relaxation techniques
  - #1 Diaphragmatic BREATHING
  - Meditate, gentle yoga, stretching

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Eliminate & Prevent

☐ Don’t “push through” initial PM tired
  ☐ Listen to initial signs of sleepiness

☐ Avoid naps
  ☐ If needed, keep routine

☐ Don’t read, TV, eat, worry in bed
  ☐ Sleep “sanctuary”: sleep, intimacy, relax

☐ Solve dilemmas outside bedroom
  ☐ If part of calming routine, reading=OK

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Eliminate & Prevent

- Poor mattress and/or pillow
  - Support spine, joints, posture
  - See quality DC to help assess
- Warm temperature in room
- Cool as comfortable
- Open window/ fresh air
- Humidifier, if dry

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Eliminate & Prevent

Light and EMFs

- Early AM walk (tea at window), Get bright light during day
- No screen/blue light: 2-3 hours before bed
- Room dark: blackout blinds, eye mask
- Eliminate EMF sources: clocks, computers, radios; NO cell phone for alarm or in bed
- Place clock out of view; no watching
- Use red light, if must have night light

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Eliminate & Prevent

- Noise and Clutter
  - Quiet, calm; earplugs
  - White noise: machines, fans
  - Clutter free zone!
  - Feng Shui – art of placement
  - Cool, soothing room colors
- Disruption, allergy/asthma
  - Pets out of bedroom; have night routine

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Eliminate & Prevent

- Avoid large meals before bed
  - Eat 2-3 hours prior to bedtime
  - Helps with weight loss/maintenance
- Avoid ↓ blood sugar/↑ cortisol at night
  - No sugary foods before bedtime
  - 2 T. raw pumpkin seeds (tryptophan)
- Avoid neurotransmitter deficiency
  - Stabilize blood sugar consistently
  - Correct insulin resistance/DM, hypoglycemia

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Eliminate & Prevent

- Partially hydrogenated fats inhibit adrenal hormone synthesis
  - Establish only good fats in your pantry
  - Support adrenal hormone synthesis
- Inflammation $\rightarrow$ stresses adrenal glands
  - Repair GI inflammation, infection, malabsorption; microbiome imbalance; Test!
- $\uparrow$ histamine $\rightarrow$ adrenal stimulant
  - Avoid allergens (food, environment- pets, mold, dust mites, carpet, fragrance, pillow sprays, diffusers); use natural allergy support
Eliminate & Prevent

- Inactivity
  - Exercise regularly! (Caution late evening)
  - Exercise = ↓ time to sleep; ↑ deep sleep
- Avoid stimulants & caffeine
  - Coffee, green/black tea, chocolate, pop, sport/energy drinks & supplements; meds, pain relievers, decongestants, weight loss
  - B Vitamins; Herbs: guarana, ginseng
- Avoid alcohol - fragmented, light sleep
  - Filtered water + herbs/mint, cucumber, fruit

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Eliminate & Prevent

- Eliminate Smoking: 1st & 2nd hand
  - Cessation program, imagery, hypnosis
- Fret less about not falling asleep
  - Keep notepad at bedside
  - Get up after 20 minutes, avoid screens
- Break association of bed with struggle

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Address Conditions Contributing to Insomnia

- Menopause
- Prostate/urinary
- Respiratory: snoring, sleep apnea, asthma, allergies
- Spinal subluxation
- Fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue, pain, pregnancy
- Adrenal fatigue/stress; Thyroid

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Prepare For Sleep

- Herbal/decaf tea: Not close to sleep; use organic
  - Chamomile, lavender, turmeric, passionflower, Avena/oat, hops
  - Traditional Medicinals, Numi, Rishi, Choice
- Avoid bleached & plastic bags, GMO soy; “natural flavors”
Prepare For Sleep

Aromatherapy/essential oils: bath, shower on washcloth, diffuser, on tissue in pillow case, spray/mister bottle, mix in a carrier oil w/1-2 drops rubbed on temples; CAUTION: allergies

- Lavender, Bitter orange, Roman Chamomile, Bergamot

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Prepare For Sleep

- **Guided Imagery** ([healthjourneys.com](http://healthjourneys.com))
  - “Healthful Sleep”, “Stress Relief”, “General Wellness”, “Ease Pain”

- **Positive Affirmations**: “I fall asleep with ease, waking refreshed”

- **Mental exercise**: Count backwards from 100 in multiples of 3
Naturopathic Support

AFTER OTHER SLEEP HYGIENE EFFORTS

- **Magnesium:** 500 mg before bed
- **Elderly adults:** slept longer, fell asleep faster, reduced early AM awakening; assoc. w/ lower cortisol, higher nighttime melatonin
- **Food:** spinach, Swiss chard, dark chocolate, pumpkin seeds, almonds, black beans, avocado, figs

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AFTER OTHER SLEEP HYGIENE EFFORTS

- Botanicals/herbs: single, combo; tea, tincture, capsule
- Sedating/calming: California poppy, Chamomile, Passion flower, Hops, Oat/Avena, Skullcap, Valerian, Kava

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Melatonin

**AFTER OTHER SLEEP HYGIENE EFFORTS**

- Activated by darkness/↓ by light
- *Lowered by*: blue light, caffeine, alcohol, tobacco, night shift work, jet lag; ? Decrease with age
- Many drug interactions!
- Vivid dreams, nightmares
- 0.5- 3 mg, prolonged release; higher dose = AM drowsiness
Naturopathic Support

After other sleep hygiene efforts

- Amino acids: calming, sedating, hormone balancing
  - GABA
  - Glycine
  - 5-HTP
  - Theanine (alpha wave; in green tea)
  - L-Tryptophan (→ Serotonin)
AFTER OTHER SLEEP HYGIENE EFFORTS

- **Hormones**: Depends on medical & family history; oral, transdermal

- **Thyroid**
- **Melatonin**
- **Phosphorylated serine** – ↓ cortisol
- **Progesterone**
Weighted blanket

- May help anxiety, insomnia, chronic pain, restless leg syndrome
- Feels like a gentle oxytocin-releasing hug; “grounding” effect, sense of relaxation
- Approx. 10% of user’s body weight
- May increase oxytocin, serotonin, melatonin
- Contraindications: diabetes, asthma, sleep apnea, circulation/BP problems, fragile skin/wound, claustrophobia, cleithrophobia

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Benadryl 😞

Common OTC antihistamine

- UW 2015 study: “persistent link between long-term use of anticholinergic medications and developing dementia.”
- Anticholinergic meds - block acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter involved in learning and memory - may have permanent effects on cognition and could lead to dementia. (2010)
- Contains multiple “Moderate Toxicity” ingredients [EWG toxicity database]

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Conventional Prescription Treatment

Do not take meds from someone else’s Rx!
Consult with your health care provider.
Use drug therapy as a last resort.

American Academy of Sleep Medicine:
www.sleepeducation.com
Sleep Well Tonight for a Better Tomorrow!

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