

ERC: Getting a Good Night's Sleep for Optimal Health, Vitality, and Longevity



Getting a Good Night's Sleep for Optimal Health, Vitality, and Longevity

Dr. Ritamarie Loscalzo

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"You know you're in love when you can't fall asleep because reality is finally better than your dreams."
— Dr. Seuss



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What You'll Learn

- * The effect of sleep deprivation on your hormones, mental function, blood sugar, metabolism, energy, and weight
- * How your hormones "dance" with each other in your sleep
- * How to adopt a bedtime ritual that encourages sound sleep including the activities, herbs, and supplements you can use to improve your sleep
- * How to understand your own sleep cycle and choose a bedtime that optimizes the amount of deep sleep you get



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Sleep Deprivation is Epidemic

- ★ 70% of Americans are sleep deprived
- ★ Between 1910 and 1960, "normal" average sleep duration was 9 hours
- ★ Current average is 7.5 hours
- ★ **1/3 of population sleeps 6 hours or less**
- ★ Shift workers sleep on average less than 5 hours per work day
- ★ **Insufficient sleep leads to: imbalance between melatonin and growth hormone**, leading to stunted growth, impaired repair, and slower healing



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Sleep Deprivation Effects

- Nurses and shift workers – studies – higher incidences of **heart disease**
- **Sleep deficit leads to**
 - performance loss
 - slowed reaction time
 - impaired memory
 - decreased motivation
- **Brain uptake of glucose** drops as much as 7% with sleep deprivation
- One sleepless night can induce **insulin resistance** in healthy people



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The Hormones That Dance in Your Sleep

Beneficial Effects During Slumber

- ★ Growth Hormone
- ★ Melatonin
- ★ Leptin



Undesirable Effects During Slumber

- ★ Cortisol
- ★ Insulin

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How to Get a Good Night's Sleep #1

- Stop eating within 3 hours of bedtime.
- Go to bed by 11:00 p.m. and get at least **7 hours of sleep**, preferably 8 or 9.
- Dim the lights in the evening to simulate natural environment and **stimulate melatonin**.
- Stop using computer **within 2 hours of bedtime**.
- Turn off the **TV** at least an hour before bedtime.
- Avoid intense exercise close to bedtime.



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How to Get a Good Night's Sleep #2

- No intense mental activity within **2 hours of bedtime**.
- Outdoor activity **early in the day** (before 1 pm).
- Turn off bright lights as soon as possible **after sunset**.
- **Neutral bath (not hot)** before bed: 15 – 60 minutes can help insomnia (add lavender oil).
- Take **sleep herbs 30 – 60 minutes before bed**, then again at bedtime.
- Get **horizontal for 30 min** to an hour before sleep.
- Practice meditation, visualization, **“mini vacations”**.



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Relaxing Herbs That Help with Sleep

- Lemon Balm
- Chamomile
- Lavender
- Milky Oat
- Valerian
- Hops
- Passion Flower
- Magnolia
- Kava Kava



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Supplements to Promote Good Sleep

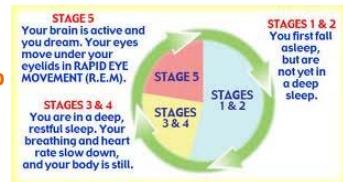
- Magnesium
- Vitamin B-6
- Melatonin
- Phosphatidyl Serine
- 5-HTP
- GABA
- Theanine



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The 5 Stages of Sleep

- * The brain activity falls overall by a mere 10%
- * **Stage 1 Transition Sleep**
 - very light
- * **Stage 2 Light Sleep**
 - beginning of true sleep: muscles relaxed, loss of awareness
- * **Stage 3 Deep Sleep**
- * **Stage 4 Deepest Stage**
- * **Stage 5 Deep Sleep – REM stage – dreaming**



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Analyzing and Optimizing Your Sleep Cycles

- * On days you need to wake up at a certain time, **pay attention to how long it takes you to fall asleep** and how you feel when awakened.
- * Pick a day or two (i.e. a weekend when you don't need to get up at a specific time), **go to bed at regular time, and sleep until you awaken naturally.**
- * Note **how long you sleep.**
- * Calculate **length of sleep cycle.**
- * Schedule a **3-day "sleep vacation".**

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