



Sleep: Herbs and Supplements

Herbs:

- ❑ **Passionflower** (*Passiflora incarnata*)
 - ❑ **Actions:**
 - ❑ Soothes the racing mind
 - ❑ Flavonoids “chrysin” and “benzoflavone” increase GABA
 - ❑ **Dosage:**
 - ❑ Anxiety: Throughout the day
 - ❑ Insomnia: An hour before bed and again during night if awakened
 - Tincture: 10 to 90 drops
 - Capsules: 90 mg
 - Tea: 1 teaspoon, steeped 10 minutes, 1 hour before bed
 - ❑ **Contraindications:**
 - ❑ Pregnancy, before surgery, with other sedatives
- ❑ **Lemon balm** (*Melissa officinalis*)
 - ❑ **Actions:**
 - ❑ Turns off mind
 - ❑ Counteracts jittery nerves, stress, and anxiety
 - ❑ Improves memory
 - ❑ **Dosage:**
 - ❑ Anxiety: Throughout the day
 - ❑ Insomnia: An hour before bed and during night if awakened
 - Plant: Pinch leaves and sniff
 - Aromatherapy: Essential oil in diffuser
 - Tincture: 30 to 40 drops
 - Capsules: 80 to 150 mg of lemon balm leaf extract combined with 160 to 320 mg of valerian root extract
 - Tea: 1 to 3 teaspoons, steeped 5 minutes, 1 hour before bed
 - ❑ **Contraindications:**
 - ❑ Severe hypothyroidism; too high of a dosage (1800 milligrams) actually increases anxiety



❑ **Chamomile** (*Matricaria recutita*)

❑ **Actions:**

- ❑ Contains 28 terpenoids and 36 flavonoids, including apigenin, which binds to benzodiazepine receptors in the brain
- ❑ Relaxes blood vessels and smooth muscle fibers
- ❑ Reduces ACTH and thus cortisol

❑ **Dosage:**

- ❑ An hour before bed and during night if awakened
 - Tincture: 30 to 40 drops
 - Capsules: 250 mg extract
 - Essential Oil: 5 to 10 drops in a tub of lukewarm water
 - Tea: 2 to 3 teaspoons, steeped 10 -15 minutes, 1 hour before bed

❑ **Contraindications:**

- ❑ Coumarin, alcohol, benzodiazepines, ragweed allergy

❑ **Milky oat** (*Avena sativa*)

❑ **Actions:**

- ❑ Nourish the nervous system - neither stimulating nor directly sedative
- ❑ Rich in silica, magnesium, phosphorus, chromium, iron, calcium, alkaloids, protein, vitamins B, A, and C
- ❑ For anxiety and stress-induced insomnia
- ❑ Combines well with ashwagandha

❑ **Dosage:**

- Tincture: 40 drops 3 times a day
- Tea: 1 to 3 teaspoons, steeped 5-15 minutes, 3-4 times a day, including 30 minutes to an hour before bed

❑ **Contraindications:**

- ❑ Celiac, oat allergy

❑ **Lavender** (*Lavandula angustifolia*)

❑ **Actions:**

- ❑ Calming and spasmolytic
- ❑ Active constituent linalool mediated through cAMP

❑ **Dosage:**

- ❑ Anxiety: Throughout the day
- ❑ Insomnia: An hour before bed and again during night if awakened
 - Aromatherapy: Oil in diffuser, on pillow
 - Topical: 1 to 2 drops essential oil on feet, neck, head, in bath
 - Tea: 1 to 2 teaspoons, steeped 10 minutes, 1 hour before bed



- ❑ **Contraindications:**
 - ❑ Internal use in children, pregnancy, before surgery, with other sedatives
- ❑ **Skullcap** (*Scutellaria lateriflora*)
 - ❑ **Actions:**
 - ❑ Relax the nerves, body, and mind
 - ❑ Constituents: Essential oil, scutellarin, scutellonin, scutellaine, essential fatty acids, calcium, potassium, magnesium, and B vitamins
 - ❑ Works well combined with valerian and hops
 - ❑ **Dosage:**
 - ❑ Three times a day, including 30 minutes to an hour before bed
 - Tincture: 60 to 100 drops (start with less)
 - Capsules: 2000 mg
 - Tea: 1 to 3 teaspoons, steeped 15 minutes, 1 hour before bed
 - ❑ **Contraindications:**
 - ❑ Pregnancy, breastfeeding, close to surgery (2 weeks), anti-anxiety medications, alcohol, blood sugar meds, liver toxicity
- ❑ **Wild lettuce** (*Lactuca virosa*)
 - ❑ **Actions:**
 - ❑ Strong, quick acting, short lasting sedative; opiate-like response without opiates
 - ❑ Constituents: Flavonoids, iron, vitamins A, B1, B2, alkaloids, sesquiterpene lactones, lactucopicrin, lactucin, apigenin, luteolin, quercetin, coumarins, mannitol, and hyoscyamine
 - ❑ **Dosage:**
 - ❑ Three times a day, including 15-30 minutes before bed
 - Tincture: 20 to 40 drops (start with less)
 - Tea: 2 teaspoons, steeped 10-15 minutes, 15 minutes before bed
 - ❑ **Contraindications:**
 - ❑ Pregnancy, breastfeeding, close to surgery (2 weeks), enlarged prostate, allergy to ragweed, narrow-angle glaucoma, sedative medication
- ❑ **Hops** (*Humulus lupulus*)
 - ❑ **Actions:**
 - ❑ Act in a similar way to melatonin
 - ❑ Works well with valerian, best results seen after 14-28 days
 - ❑ Estrogenic effects
 - ❑ **Dosage:**
 - ❑ Insomnia: An hour before bed and during night if awakened, 2-3 x daily



- Tincture: 30 to 40 drops, best with Valerian
- Capsules: 80 to 150 mg of hops extract combined with 160 to 320 mg of valerian root extract
- Tea: 1 to 3 teaspoons, steeped 5 minutes, 1 hour before bed
- ❑ **Contraindications:**
 - ❑ Pregnancy and breast-feeding, depression, hormone sensitive cancers, pre-surgery
- ❑ **Valerian** (*Valeriana officinalis*)
 - ❑ **Actions:**
 - ❑ Synergy: hops, lemon balm, skullcap and kava
 - ❑ GABA receptor agonist
 - ❑ Causes paradoxical reaction in a small minority of people
 - ❑ Root has the sedative action
 - ❑ **Dosage:**
 - ❑ An hour before bed and during night if awakened, 2-3 x daily for anxiety
 - Tincture: 30 to 40 drops, best with hops
 - Capsules: 400 to 900 mg, 160 to 320 mg combined with 80 to 150 mg of hops extract, or 120 mg combined with 80 mg lemon balm extract
 - Tea: Not pleasant, decoction
 - ❑ **Contraindications:**
 - ❑ Pregnancy and breast-feeding, pre-surgery, with sedative medications, alcohol
- ❑ **California poppy** (*Eschscholzia californica*)
 - ❑ **Actions:**
 - ❑ Synergy: hawthorn
 - ❑ Antioxidants such as rutin and zeaxanthin; alkaloids berberine and sanguinarine; other alkaloids especially protopine and allocryptine which are known soporifics
 - ❑ **Dosage:**
 - ❑ An hour before bed and during night if awakened, 2-3 x daily for anxiety
 - Tincture: 30 to 40 drops, 2-3 x daily
 - Tea: 1 cup 2-3 x daily
 - ❑ **Contraindications:**
 - ❑ Sedative medications (Benzodiazepines) interacts with California poppy; stop using California poppy at least 2 weeks before a scheduled surgery



❑ **Kava kava** (*Piper methysticum*)

❑ **Actions:**

- ❑ Synergy: Cannabis, valerian, catmint, and chamomile will increase the sedative effects
- ❑ Active psychotropic constituents; kava lactones (kavapyrones) in fresh roots and rhizomes: kawain, dihydrokawain, and methysticum

❑ **Dosage:**

- ❑ Any product conferring 250 mg collective kavalactones; 300 mg daily in three divided doses for at most 4 weeks
 - Tincture: 1 teaspoon or five milliliters (30 to 35 drops from a standard eyedropper)
 - Capsules: 150 mg to 200 mg, approximately 20-30 minutes before retiring
 - Tea: 1 cup daily

❑ **Contraindications:**

- ❑ Liver issues, depression, Parkinson's, pregnant or breastfeeding women; don't take if you are having surgery, as it can prolong the effect of anesthesia; kava can be more toxic to people with Western genetics

❑ **Magnolia** (*Magnolia officinalis*)

❑ **Actions:**

- ❑ Synergy: Amur corktree, jujube seed, ginger
- ❑ Mechanism: Antioxidants honokiol and magnolol: primary anti-stress and cortisol-balancing effects; acts on GABA system

❑ **Dosage:**

- Tincture: 10 to 30 drops, 3x per day
- Capsules: 400 mg
- Tea: Fat-soluble, so drink with meals
- Enema: Enemas of magnolia bark appear to result in higher circulating levels of bioactives than oral ingestion

❑ **Contraindications:**

- ❑ Pregnancy, dehydration, alcohol, or sedative medications; the tubocurarine and related substances in magnolia bark may cause respiratory paralysis

❑ **St. John's wort** (*Hypericum perforatum*)

❑ **Actions:**

- ❑ Synergy: Passion flower
- ❑ Mechanism: Hypericin thought to work by reuptake inhibition leading to increased melatonin; GABA receptors



- ❑ **Dosage:**
 - ❑ Takes some time to build up in the blood; allow at least four weeks to see if it works
 - ❑ Can be used long-term as needed
 - ❑ Take with meals to reduce the risk of stomach irritation
 - Tincture: 1/2 to 1 teaspoon 2-3 x daily
 - Capsules: 1 to 2 tablets or capsules 2-3 x daily
 - Tea: 1 to 2 teaspoons in 1 to 2 cups of tea a day for at least four weeks is recommended
- ❑ **Contraindications:**
 - ❑ Can create sensitivity to light; be careful with MAOIs and others that increase serotonin
- ❑ **Catnip** (*Nepeta cataria*)
 - ❑ **Actions:**
 - ❑ Synergy: Fennel, skullcap, lemon balm, milky oat
 - ❑ Mechanism: Nepetalactone, terpenoid, makes people relaxed, drowsy, and ready for bed; mild central nervous system sedative
 - ❑ **Dosage:**
 - Tincture: 30 to 50 drops, 3x daily
 - Capsules: 760 mg, 2 to 3 capsules, 3x daily, with food
 - Tea: 1 to 2 teaspoons, 1-3 x daily; it's bitter, so add peppermint or lemon balm
 - ❑ **Contraindications:**
 - ❑ Risky to use in cases of kidney or liver issues; pregnant women should avoid, as it can prematurely induce labor



Supplements:

Melatonin

- Supplementation can help sleep and mood problems – can be tricky
 - Excess → nightmares; in some people, it can cause insomnia/depression
- Dosage: 3 mg - 5 mg

Sedative herbs

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Passionflower | <input type="checkbox"/> Skullcap | <input type="checkbox"/> Kava kava |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lemon balm | <input type="checkbox"/> Wild lettuce | <input type="checkbox"/> Magnolia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chamomile | <input type="checkbox"/> Hops | <input type="checkbox"/> St. John's wort |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Milky oat | <input type="checkbox"/> Valerian | <input type="checkbox"/> Catnip |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lavender | <input type="checkbox"/> California poppy | |

Essential oils

- | | | |
|--|--|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lavender | <input type="checkbox"/> Ylang ylang | <input type="checkbox"/> Sandalwood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vetiver | <input type="checkbox"/> Clary sage | <input type="checkbox"/> Marjoram |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roman chamomile | <input type="checkbox"/> Valerian root | <input type="checkbox"/> Cedarwood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frankincense | <input type="checkbox"/> Bergamot | <input type="checkbox"/> Orange |

Adaptogens

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ashwagandha | <input type="checkbox"/> Ginseng (Korean and American) | <input type="checkbox"/> Rhodiola |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Schisandra | <input type="checkbox"/> Holy Basil (Tulsi) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eleuthero | | |

Amino acids

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Serine | <input type="checkbox"/> 5-HTP | <input type="checkbox"/> Glutamine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Theanine | <input type="checkbox"/> GABA | <input type="checkbox"/> Taurine |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tryptophan | <input type="checkbox"/> Glycine | |

Vitamins

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin B6 | <input type="checkbox"/> Vitamin B12 |
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Minerals

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Magnesium | <input type="checkbox"/> Calcium | <input type="checkbox"/> Zinc |
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