



Healthy Sleep Habitzzzz

Dr. Chandra Villano, ND

A full moon is visible in the upper left quadrant of the image, set against a dark, starry night sky. Below the moon, a body of water reflects its light, creating a shimmering path that leads towards the bottom center of the frame. The overall scene is serene and nocturnal.

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

Sleep Deprivation



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Eliminate & Prevent

- Partially hydrogenated fats inhibit adrenal hormone synthesis
 - Establish only good fats in your pantry
 - Support adrenal hormone synthesis
- Inflammation → stresses adrenal glands
 - Repair GI inflammation, infection, malabsorption; microbiome imbalance; Test!
- ↑ histamine → 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

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

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

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

Prepare For

Sleep

- **Guided Imagery** (*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

Naturopathic

Support



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

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)

Naturopathic

Support

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

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]



*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!

Dr. Chandra Villano, ND
vibranthealth@nwi.net