



# Eat Your Way to Better Sleep

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# Importance of Sleep

- Improves learning, decision-making, alertness, and creativity
- Helps with healing and repairing heart and blood vessels
- Supports weight Maintenance
- Strengthens immune system
- Improves productivity



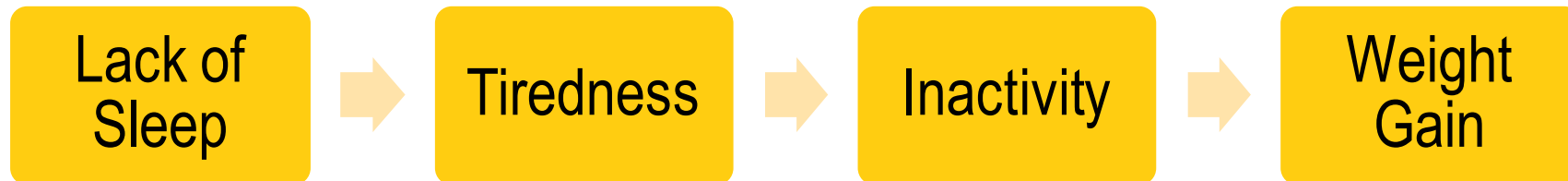
# Sleep Recommendation

- Getting enough sleep is essential in living a healthy lifestyle
- The National Sleep Foundation recommends most get 7-9 hours of sleep each night



# Sleep and Body Weight

- Studies show that people who get less than 6 hours of sleep per night gain weight more quickly than those who get more than 6 hours
- Hormones that control hunger and fat storage may be affected by lack of sleep
- Chronic lack of sleep may lead to an imbalance of hormones, which may decrease metabolism resulting in weight gain



# Sleep and Mealtimes

- Studies show people who do not get adequate sleep are more likely to skip breakfast and replace meals with snacks
- Those who replace meal with snacks are also more likely to eat late at night



# Nutrients That May Help with Sleep

- **Folate** – Studies show there may be a correlation between folate deficiency and sleep quality.
- **Selenium** – Studies suggest low selenium intake may be associated with difficulty falling asleep.
- **Vitamin C** – Studies suggest low vitamin C intake may be associated with non-restorative sleep.
- **Vitamin D** – Although studies are limited, there is evidence vitamin D is associated with less difficulty maintaining sleep and regulating the sleep cycle.
- **Calcium** – Calcium may be associated with decreased difficulty falling asleep. Supplementing with calcium may also have sedative effects.
- **Magnesium** – Supplementing with magnesium may have sedative effects.
- **Potassium** – Studies suggest potassium may be associated with decreased daytime sleepiness and earlier sleep time.
- **Lycopene** – Lycopene is an antioxidant associated with less difficulty falling asleep.

# Rumor Has It: Eating Turkey Makes You Tired

- Although turkey does contain tryptophan—an essential amino acid that helps produce serotonin and melatonin—it does not contain more tryptophan than other meat and dairy sources.
- Tryptophan can reach the brain more quickly when eaten with carbs. During feasts such as Thanksgiving, so much carb-containing food is eaten that tryptophan can reach the brain more easily and make us tired.
- Tryptophan is found in a variety of foods, including poultry, milk, nuts, seeds, bananas, honey, and eggs.



# Rumor Has It: Warm Milk Helps You Fall Asleep

- Due to its sleep-promoting contents of calcium, magnesium, tryptophan, and melatonin, milk may actually help you fall asleep.
- Some people have found supplementing calcium and magnesium has sedative effects.
- To avoid digestive discomfort, stick to a small glass of milk before bed.
- Studies also show improved sleep quality when milk is mixed with Horlick Powder—a combination of malted barley and wheat.





# Rumor Has It: Alcohol Can Help You Get a Good Night's Rest

- Although some people may be able to fall asleep more quickly after drinking, alcohol keeps you from going through the stage of sleep that is important for learning and feeling energized.
- Alcohol can also cause you to wake more frequently during the night.



# Rumor Has It: Chamomile Tea Improves Sleep

- While there is little research, some evidence shows drinking chamomile tea can improve sleep due to a component in the chamomile plant that has sleep-causing effects.
- Chamomile tea contains a flavonoid that may have sedative effects.
- For centuries, chamomile tea has been used to help with sleep, stress, mood, and as an anti-inflammatory.



# Snacks That May Help You Snooze

- **Kiwifruit** – Some research suggest the high serotonin content found in kiwis may improve sleep quality.
- **Tart cherries** – Some studies suggest melatonin found in cherries (particularly potent in tart varieties) may improve sleep quality.
- **Cereal and milk**  
**Yogurt and crackers**  
**Bread and cheese** – Pairing tryptophan-containing foods, such as dairy, with high-carbohydrate foods can help promote sleep.

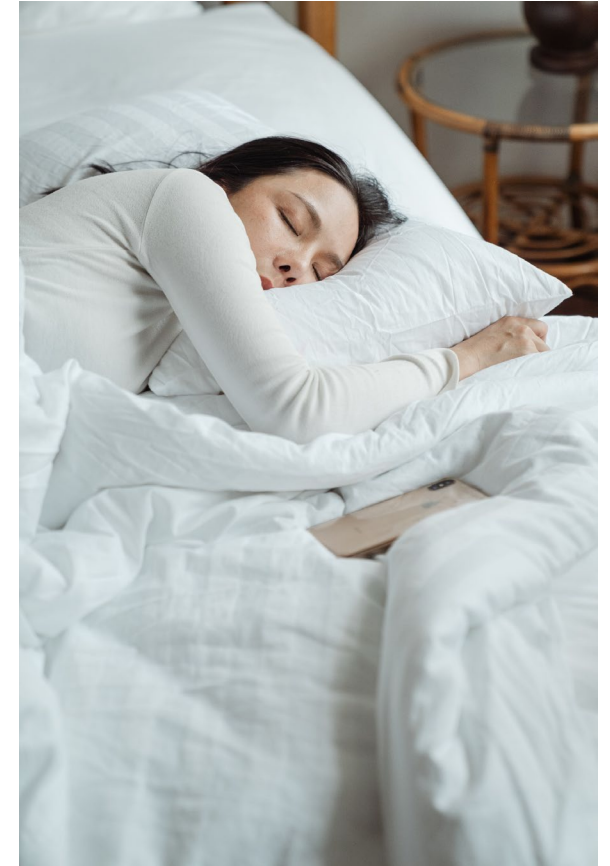


# Foods to Avoid Before Bed

- **Caffeine** – Caffeine affects everyone differently, but if you are having trouble sleeping, try drinking it only in the morning.
- **Alcohol** – Alcohol disrupts the sleep cycle and can cause more night wakings.
- **Heavy meals** – Heavy meals can cause digestive discomfort, which may keep you up at night.
- **Spicy foods** – Spicy foods can cause heartburn and upset stomach, disrupting sleep.
- **Fluids** – Stay hydrated during the day, but avoid fluids right before bed to avoid having to wake up and use the bathroom.
- **Dairy** – If you consume dairy before bed (such as a glass of warm milk), keep it to a small amount to avoid indigestion.

# Tips to Improve Sleep

- **Exercise during the day, but avoid exercise right before bedtime** - Exercise helps you produce endorphins and regulate body temperature, both which will help you sleep better.
- **Avoid tobacco** – Tobacco is a stimulant and can keep you up.
- **Get plenty of sunlight during the day** – When it is dark, you naturally begin to produce the hormone melatonin, which makes you sleepy. By getting plenty of sunlight during the day, you can improve your sleep cycle so you are more alert during the day.
- **Create a bedtime ritual** – Being consistent with your sleep-wake times promotes better sleep.
- **Keep your sleep space at a cool temperature during bedtime** – Your room temperature should ideally be between 60-67 degrees Fahrenheit.



# Conclusion

- To improve sleep, eat a well-balanced diet rich in:
  - Fresh fruits
  - Vegetables
  - Whole grains
  - Low-fat protein
- Space nutritious meals and snacks evenly throughout the day

