

Nutrition and Sleep



It's well known that nutrition has an impactful influence on body weight/fat, diabetes risk, and heart health, but science suggests our diet may also have a significant impact on the quality of our sleep.

- For most individuals, a balanced diet rich in a large variety of fruits and vegetables provides the recommended intake of vitamins and minerals that are known to contribute to better sleep.
- While not definitive, research suggests diet affects the hormonal pathways involved in sleep.
- One large study found a lack of key nutrients—calcium, magnesium, and vitamins A, C, D, E, and K—to be associated with sleep problems.
- High-carbohydrate meals with high glycemic indexes are known to affect energy level and sleep quality.
- High-carbohydrate intake has been shown to increase the number of awakenings and reduce the amount of deep sleep individuals get while trying to snooze.
- Frequent consumption of energy drinks and sugar-sweetened beverages is associated with poor sleep quality.
- Studies have found that individuals who follow the Mediterranean Diet—which emphasizes lean meats, whole grains, and high-fiber foods—and the DASH Diet—which focuses on whole foods high in fiber while low in sodium and saturated fat—tend to report better quality sleep.
- If you want to improve your sleep and nutrition, talking with your healthcare provider is a great place to start! He or she can help identify any barriers to sleep, including potential sleep disorders, and recommend a nutrition plan that best suits your needs.
- **Caterpillar Registered Dietitian Rhonda Haller** is also available to provide free nutrition consults to U.S. Caterpillar employees. Contact Rhonda at [Haller Rhonda M@cat.com](mailto:Haller_Rhonda_M@cat.com) or **309-675-1704!**

Source: Sleep Foundation (sleepfoundation.org)