

Healthy Handout

Volume 1
Issue 7

Falling Asleep Naturally Safe Alternatives to Sleep Aids

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Aids



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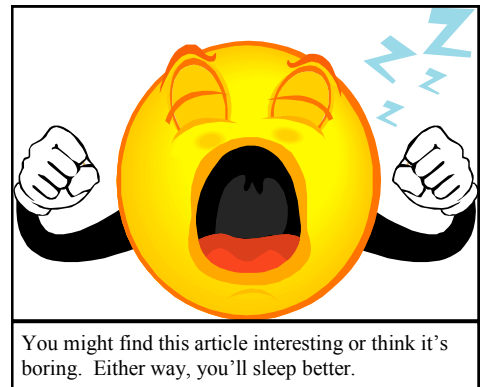
Coupon!

Many people have a tough time falling asleep. Some have sleep disorders such as insomnia, while others just feel restless. Most pharmaceutical sleep aids are habit-forming, and your body can build an immunity to them. There are various natural methods of improving sleep, but it's important to use caution when choosing which ones to try.

While herbs such as valerian root and kava kava can be used as sleep aids, they are not recommended for long-term use. They both have sedative properties which may impair your ability to drive or operate machinery.

Both have been associated with a risk of liver toxicity, but there is no conclusive evidence that links valerian to liver damage. Kava kava has potential to damage the liver only if the upper parts of the plant are used in the supplement. Make sure that any kava kava supplement you take is made exclusively from the root.

Without prescription drugs or herbal supplements, it may seem like options for sleep aids are lacking. Fortunately, your body has the capability of producing everything you need to have a good night's sleep. People with sleep disorders tend to lack either melatonin or gamma aminobutyric acid (GABA). It may be possible to correct sleep disorders by restoring proper levels of GABA and melatonin.



You might find this article interesting or think it's boring. Either way, you'll sleep better.

Melatonin is a sleep-inducing chemical that your brain makes from serotonin. When light levels are low, the pineal gland releases melatonin. Sleep deprivation can occur when inadequate amounts of melatonin are released by the pineal gland.

Direct supplementation with melatonin can help induce sleep but only if your melatonin levels are low. People with normal melatonin levels experience no effects from taking melatonin. However, 5 HTP stimulates melatonin production by increasing a levels of other neurotransmitters such as serotonin.

Instead of just inducing sleep, 5 HTP improves the quality of sleep without increasing total sleep time. That means people who take 5 HTP feel less tired when they wake up. It's a safe, natural

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Store Information

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Hours

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Sat..... 9 a.m.-5 p.m.



“Making it easier to be healthy.”

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way to boost serotonin levels while also improving sleep.

Increasing GABA levels can also improve sleep. Unlike melatonin, GABA does not actually induce sleep. It is an inhibitory neurotransmitter, which means it regulates the rate of electrical impulses in your brain. That means you feel calm and alert rather than feeling like your mind is racing. So during the day, GABA can help keep you focused and alert, but at night it makes you feel relaxed when you want to go to sleep.

There are GABA supplements, but GABA has difficulty crossing the blood-brain barrier. L-theanine works as a precursor to GABA, much like 5 HTP does with melatonin. It is a natural amino acid found in green tea and is available

through supplements as well.

When choosing an L-theanine supplement, it's best to find one that uses *Suntheanine*, which is available in many brands of supplements. Sometimes, manufacturers mix L-theanine with D-theanine, which has different properties.

By regulating brain chemicals like melatonin and GABA, you can improve sleep and feel better when you're awake. Supplements like 5 HTP and L-Theanine are completely natural, non-addictive and safe for long term use. Of course, different supplements work for different people. See which ones work best for you.

Upcoming Events

August 8
Weight Loss
Surgery Group
11 a.m.



August 11
Children's Recycled
Art Day
10 a.m.-2 p.m.



August 20
Diakon Lutheran
Programs
11 a.m.



August 24
Gluten Free
Support Group
6:30 p.m.



August 29
Aromatherapy
Presentation
3 p.m.



Questions?
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Quick ~ Healthy ~ Delicious

Lullaby Muffins

- | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 2 cups whole-wheat pastry flour | 1/2 teaspoon salt |
| 1 tablespoon baking powder | 2 large, very ripe bananas |
| 1/3 cup applesauce | 1/4 cup honey |
| 1/2 cup milk or soymilk | |

Preheat oven to 350F. In a large bowl, combine the flour (make sure it's whole-wheat pastry flour or you'll produce golf balls, not muffins), salt, and baking powder. In a blender, puree the bananas; add the applesauce, honey, and milk. Blend well. Pour the banana mixture into the dry ingredients and stir until just moistened. Line muffin tins with paper muffin cups, pour in batter, and bake 30 minutes or until tops are lightly brown and slightly springy. Makes 12 muffins.

Dr. T. Says...

Improving the quality of your sleep can improve all aspects of your health. Here are a few things to remember:

- **Drugs and herbs are not always safe for long-term use.**
- **Supplements like L-Theanine and 5 HTP balance brain chemicals instead of sedating you.**
- **Balancing GABA and melatonin helps you function better when you're awake, as well as when you're sleeping.**

Before taking any supplements, be sure to research drug interactions if you are currently taking a sleep aid. Thanks for reading!

Healthy Habits Natural Market is a locally owned, independent health food and products store located in Orwigsburg, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. We are located near Pottsville, Reading, Tamaqua, Pine Grove, and Hamburg. We carry local organically grown produce, meats, dairy, and eggs. We also carry many natural and organic products, including pet foods and treats.