

Sleep Matters

Patricia Kyritsi Howell, RH (AHG)
Organic Growers School Harvest Conference 2017

Insomnia: Difficulty in sleeping, or disturbed sleep patterns leaving the perception of insufficient sleep.
(*The Merck Manual*)

Sleep: *Sleep is a regularly recurring suspension of consciousness that serves recuperative and adaptive functions. Sleep usually requires the presences of flaccid or relaxed skeletal muscles and the absence of overt, goal directed behavior often seen in wakeful organisms. (Encyclopedia Britannica)*

Guidelines for Better Sleep

Sleep as much as you need to feel refreshed and well rested.

Get up at the same time each day, no matter when you went to sleep.

For deep, quality sleep, try to be in bed by 9:30 pm; lights out by 10 or 10:30 pm.

Do an appropriate amount of physical exercise each day.

Make sure you are exposed to direct sunlight for at least 20 to 30 minutes each day.

No work, computers, TV, phone in your bedroom, or one to two hours before bedtime.

Do some gentle yoga or stretching at bedtime to relax muscles and breathing.

Transition to sleep by gradually slowing down activity during the evening.

Sleep in a cool, dark, quiet room. Adjust light as needed.

Use eyeshades and earplugs.

Invest in a comfortable bed, pillows and linens.

If you don't fall asleep after 30 minutes, get up and go into another room and read, etc.

Have a light snack close to bedtime (no sweets).

Don't take naps.

Limit caffeine, alcohol and tobacco intake (or avoid altogether).

Try not rehashing your day at bedtime (or use a journal to "park" your day).

Consider the *cause* of insomnia and attempt to resolve it.

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Herbs for Sleep and Relaxation

Mild Nervine Relaxants

Chamomile
Lemon Balm
Catnip
Linden flower/leaf

Moderate Nervine Relaxants (Sedative)

Milky or Wild Oat
Motherwort
Skullcap
St. Johnswort

Strong Nervine Relaxants (Hypnotic)

California Poppy
Hops
Kava kava
Passionflower
Valerian

Adaptogens

American Ginseng
Ashwaganda
Eleuthero (aka Siberian Ginseng)
Reishi
Schisandra

Dosage Guidelines

Use mild nervines in the early evening to begin to signal to your nervous system that you are slowing down and preparing to rest.

Avoid drinking tea too close to bedtime to avoid having to wake up and go to the bathroom.

Take a dose of herbs 1 hour before bedtime, a second dose at bedtime and have a third dose next to the bed to take if needed.

It may take several nights (or up to a week or more) for sleep patterns to change.

You may need to rotate between two to three nervines for best results.