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SLEEP – THE FOUNTAIN OF YOUTH

Secrets for restful sleep

Healthy sleep is the foundation of your health.

Deep sleep is a time when our energy is restored and replenished. The healing of mind, body and spirit occurs during deep, restful sleep. Our brain waves will normally shift to a lower vibrational frequency as we move from the initial stages of sleep to the deeper stages, such as the rapid eye movement stage (REM).

Are you unable to fall asleep? Wake up often throughout the night? Don't feel well-rested when you awake in the morning? Do you want to improve your quality and quantity of your sleep?

Consider the following options:

- **Avoid alcohol.** Although alcohol will make people drowsy, the effect is short lived and people often wake up several hours later, unable to fall back asleep. Alcohol will also keep you from falling into the deeper stages.
- **Avoid before-bed snacks, particularly grains and sugars.** This will raise blood sugar and inhibit sleep. Later, when blood sugar drops too low (hypoglycemia), you might wake up and not be able to fall back asleep.
- **Avoid caffeine.** A recent study showed that in some people, caffeine is not metabolized efficiently and therefore, they can feel the effects long after consuming it. The effect from an afternoon cup of coffee (or even tea) will keep some people from falling asleep. Various medications, particularly diet pills contain caffeine.
- **Avoid foods that you may be sensitive to.** This is especially true for dairy, sugar and wheat products, as they may have effect on sleep, such as causing apnea, excess congestion, gastrointestinal upset and gas, among other side effects.
- **Avoid using loud alarm clocks.** It is very stressful on the body to be awoken suddenly. If you are regularly getting enough sleep, they should be unnecessary. . If these devices must be used, keep them as far away from the bed as possible, preferably at least 5 feet.
- **Check hormones.** Hormonal disruption happens during peri-menopause, menopause and adropause which may cause problems if not properly addressed. For a list of hormones to test, download from my website, www.PaulaOwens.com or locate in my book, *The Power of 4*.
- **Check your bedroom for electro-magnetic fields (EMFs).** These include electrical alarm clocks, electric blankets, etc. They disrupt the pineal gland and the production of melatonin and serotonin along with other negative effects as well.
- **Consider supplementing with magnesium before bedtime.**
- **Eat a high-protein snack several hours before bed.** This can provide the L-tryptophan needed to produce melatonin and serotonin.

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- **Exercise regularly.** Exercising for at least 30 minutes EVERYDAY can help you fall asleep. However, exercising too close to bedtime may keep you awake.
- **Get to bed as early as possible.** Our systems, particularly the adrenals, do a majority of their recharging or recovering during the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 1:00 a.m. In addition, your gallbladder dumps toxins during this same period. If you are awake, the toxins back up into the liver which then secondarily back up into your entire system and cause further disruption of your health. Waking up between the hours of 1:00 a.m. – 3:00 a.m., may indicate liver toxicity/congestion. Consistently waking between 3:00 a.m. – 5:00 a.m., indicates oxidative stress. Also, consider hypoglycemia.
- **Got to bed and wake up at the same time each day.** Go to bed and wake up at the same times each day, even on the weekends. This will help your body to get into a sleep rhythm and make it easier to fall asleep and get up in the morning. Prior to the widespread use of electricity, people would go to bed shortly after sundown, as most animals do, and which nature intended for humans as well.
- **Herbal Tranquilizer.** Valerian, Hops and Passion Flower.....an excellent herbal tranquilizer used for insomnia. Biotics VHP
- **Journaling.** If you often lay in bed with your mind racing, keep a journal and write down your thoughts before bed.
- **Keep the temperature in the bedroom no higher than 70 degrees F.** Many people keep their homes and particularly the upstairs bedrooms too hot.
- **Keep your bed for sleeping.** If you are used to watching TV or doing work in bed, you may find it harder to relax and to think of the bed as a place to sleep.
- **Listen to White Noise or Relaxation CDs.** Some people find the sound of white noise or nature sounds, such as the ocean or forest, to be soothing for sleep.
- **Lose weight.** Being overweight can increase the risk of sleep apnea, which will prevent a restful nights' sleep.
- **Melatonin and its precursors.** If behavioral changes don't work, it may be possible to improve sleep by supplementing with the hormone melatonin. However, use extreme caution in using it, and only as a last resort, as it is a powerful hormone. Ideally it is best to increase levels of melatonin naturally with exposure to bright sunlight in the daytime (along with full spectrum fluorescent bulbs in the winter) and absolute complete darkness at night. One should get blackout drapes so no light is coming in from the outside. One can also consider one of melatonin's precursors, L-tryptophan or 5-hydroxytryptophan (5-HTP). 5-HTP should not be used in very high doses, during pregnancy or lactation or by individuals taking antidepressant drugs or individuals with significant cardiovascular disease. Always discuss with your doctor prior to using.
- **No TV or computer 2 hours before bedtime.** Remove the TV from your bedroom. It is too stimulating to your brain, and it will take longer to fall asleep. Also, television is disruptive to pineal gland function for the same reason as above.
- **Read something spiritual or religious.** This will help to relax. Refrain from reading anything stimulating, such as a mystery or suspense novel, as this may have the opposite effect. In addition, if you are really enjoying a suspenseful book, you might wind up unintentionally reading for hours, instead of going to sleep.
- **Reduce or avoid pharmaceutical drugs.** Many medications, both prescription and over-the-counter may have effects on sleep. Addiction to sleeping aids is often an indication of depression.
- **Refrain from drinking fluids within 2 hours of going to bed.** This will reduce the likelihood of needing to get up and go to the bathroom or at least minimize the frequency.

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- **Remove the clock from view.** It will only add to your worry when constantly staring at it... 2 AM...3 AM... 4:30 AM...
- **Sleep in complete darkness or as close as possible.** If there is even the tiniest bit of light in the room it can disrupt your circadian rhythm and your pineal gland's production of melatonin and serotonin. Minimize light in the bathroom too, in case you get up in the middle of the night. Keep the light off when you go to the bathroom at night. As soon as you turn on that light you will for that night immediately cease all production of the important sleep aid melatonin.
- **Stop eating 2 hours before bedtime.** Eating within two hours of going to bed inhibits growth hormone. Growth Hormone is released within the first two hours of falling asleep.
- **Take a hot bath, shower or sauna before bed.** When body temperature is raised in the late evening, it will fall at bedtime, facilitating sleep. Add some Epsom salts to the bath (magnesium is absorbed through your skin). This promotes muscular relaxation. Also, essential aromatic oils, such as lavender, provide a state of calm, enhancing sleep.
- **Test your adrenals.** Scientists have found that insomnia may be caused by adrenal stress. (*Journal of Clinical Endocrinology & Metabolism, August 2001; 86:3787*)
- **Wear socks to bed.** Your feet have the poorest circulation in the body. Your feet often feel cold before the rest of the body. A study has shown that wearing socks to bed may reduce waking up throughout the night.

~ For more Winning Formulas on sleep, please read my book, **The POWER OF 4: Your Ultimate Guide Guaranteed to Change Your Body and Transform Your Life.**

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Your ultimate source for
Health, Vitality, Longevity and Fat Loss

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