



SLEEP

As a health coach I advise clients to prepare a sleep diary in advance of my personal consultations to identify where in the cycle sleep is disrupted and how to put new routines in place that with consistent work can replace some old patterns of sleep and replace with improved ones.

JOURNAL EXERCISE

- Have you difficulty getting to sleep?
- Are you waking in the middle of the night / drifting in and out?
- Waking up tired and exhausted the next day even after 'sleeping'?
- Are you eating before bed / what type of food and drinks are you having?
- Are you using a lot of devices or watching a lot of T.V at present?
- What is your sleep space like?
- Are you getting exercise / Are you exposing the skin to natural light?

FOODS / DRINKS , LOSING WEIGHT AND SLEEP – WHATS THE CONNECTION?

- If you are **calorie counting** but not seeing your weight decrease, going to bed late at night may be a route cause.
- Many studies have shown that **sleep deprivation** (whether due to self-induction, insomnia, untreated sleep apnea, or other sleep disorders) commonly leads to **poor functioning metabolism**. Poor sleep is associated with increased oxidative stress, glucose (blood sugar) intolerance (a precursor to diabetes), and insulin resistance. Extra time spent awake may increase the opportunities to eat, and sleeping less may disrupt circadian rhythms, leading to weight gain. (www.sleepfoundation.org)

- A balanced **diet containing all the food groups** and are whole food natural sources go hand in hand with sound sleep allowing the body to repair and renew itself before a new day.
- Following **zero carb plans or low carb plans** can impact your sleep. While you can get sleep inducing tryptophan from protein sources, the body needs insulin to convert tryptophan to serotonin and then onto melatonin which regulates the sleep cycles. If you are following a low-carb programme , reduce your grams slowly so as not to impact on the chemical reactions needed for a good nights sleep.
- **Foods / drinks** that prevent you from getting to sleep and staying sleep include chemical sugars, fizzy caffeinated drinks, refined carbohydrates, processed foods and excess caffeine particularly after 2pm.
- **Consuming a large meal** close to bedtime will interfere with how the body winds down for sleep.
- **Eating a lot of sugary foods** during the day will interfere with the body's blood sugar and create excess fatigue which may lead to sleeplessness.
- **Going to bed hungry** can also be a problem so its best to have a light snack like a night time smoothie (see my recipes!), oats, banana, yogurt, handful almonds or mixed nuts.
- **Alcohol** can prevent the body from getting deep sleep needed for restoration and repair of the body and its function.

WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM NATURAL WHOLE FOODS TO ENCOURAGE A GOOD NIGHTS SLEEP?

- **T- Tryptophan** - is a protein that promotes **sleep** and is found in small amounts in all protein foods.

Tryptophan is an amino acid (protein) which is needed to make the hormone serotonin (which regulates our sleep wake cycle and internal body clock) and then melatonin a hormone required to send the chemical messengers to the brain to unwind us for sleep.

TRYPTOPHAN FOODS: FRESH MEATS / FISH / EGGS/ DAIRY / PULSES / POTATO / BANANAS/ OATS / BROWN RICE / QUINOA

- **S- Serotonin** – Serotonin is a hormone / neurotransmitter made mainly in our gut, but some is made in the brain.

Serotonin plus tryptophan = melatonin basically!

SEROTONIN FOODS: FRESH MEAT / FISH / EGGS/ NUTS / GRAINS/ SEEDS / POPCORN

- **M-Melatonin** -is a naturally occurring hormone that is key to **sleep** and the **sleep-wake cycle**

It is lower in the day when the body is awake and levels rise as we move into evening and night. Cue – for ‘time to sleep’

In the body, **melatonin** is produced by the pineal gland in the brain when night falls. ... Our circadian rhythm (or 'body clock') is influenced by **melatonin**, as it acts as a 'time cue', anticipating **sleep**

MELATONIN FOODS: KIWI / POPCORN / NUTS/ FRESH CHERRIES / PISTACHIOS / OATS / MILK / WHOLEGRAINS / FRESH FRUIT & VEGETABLES

- **O- Omega 3** **These** fatty acids from regularly consuming fish may get help get you off to sleep , keep you in sound sleep and ensure you are refreshed and restored the next day.

One of the 3 Omegas; DHA stimulates melatonin and as we know now melatonin is the main hormone in enducing sleep

DHA FOODS: WILD SALMON, MACKEREL (INCLUDING TINS), TUNA, TROUT , ATLANTIC COD

- **G- GABA** - a neurotransmitter that basically puts the brakes on the brain! It works to reduce brain activity and moves the body into 1st gear preparing you for sleep! In doing so GABA encourages sleep & calmness reducing stress and anxiety.

I call GABA the brakes of the brain. GABA is the body’s most important *inhibitory neurotransmitter*, which means it *lowers the activity* of neural cells in the brain and central nervous system, having the effect of moving the brain and the body into lower gear. By inhibiting neural activity, GABA facilitates sleep, reduces mental and physical stress, lowers anxiety, and creates a calmness of mood.

GABA FOODS: KEFIR / GREEN TEA / BEANS / PEAS / LENTILS / WHOLEGRAINS / NATURAL YOGURT / BROWN RICE / TEMPEH

- **M – Magnesium** – Magnesium & GABA work together! Magnesium is a mineral that increases the amount of GABA in the brain.

MAGNESIUM FOODS: LEAFY GREENS, AVOCADO, ALMONDS, WALNUTS, OATS, FIGS, DARK CHOCOLATE, BANANA, PUMPKIN SEEDS, NATURAL YOGURT, KEFIR