

Module 16 Resources

Treatment For Sleep Disorders

Caffeine: Before trying sleep remedies, make sure you're not consuming too much caffeine late in the day. I've noticed that this makes a huge difference to my patients in their falling asleep ability. Eliminating caffeine after noon could be effective as a first step, and more effective than the following options.

Melatonin: Melatonin is the common over-the-counter supplement taken for sleep. Most often the recommended dose is between 0.5 - 3mg. Recently, higher dose formulations have become prevalent and I've seen many patients taking 5, 10 or even 20 mg of melatonin, often with significant sedation the next day. Remember that melatonin is a carefully regulated hormone that is involved in much more than sleep in your body and brain. When you take too much, it tells your brain to make less, which is one of the reasons lower doses are safer and more effective.

Magnesium:

- One of the first moves for insomnia is to take magnesium at night and increase the magnesium-rich foods that you consume (e.g. beans, greens; see modules 12 and 13). Magnesium is more than just another mineral. In the brain it is a NMDA receptor antagonist, much like the rapid acting antidepressant ketamine, and a GABA agonist, meaning it binds to the same receptors as medications like Valium or Xanax and alcohol, which is likely why it has a reputation for promoting a sense of calm.
- Taking too much magnesium can lead to diarrhea and so I recommend people start with 200 mg and move up from there. Subjective (self reports) and objective (measures of cortisol, renin, and melatonin) measures of insomnia were improved in an elderly population who were given 500mg of nightly magnesium compared to placebo. There are many formulations of magnesium. Most supplements contain magnesium citrate or magnesium glycinate, both of which are well absorbed.
- [The effect of magnesium supplementation on primary insomnia in elderly](#)

CBD:

- Cannabidiol (**CBD**) is one of the major phytochemicals in the cannabis plant, but unlike its close cousin, THC, you do not get high or intoxicated with CBD. There is not much scientific evidence currently on the use of CBD in sleep, but many reports of personal success. In a recent retrospective chart review of 102 patients with insomnia, CBD initially helped 67 percent of patients improve sleep. Anxiety improved in almost 80 percent of participants. If you try CBD to help with sleep, the experts on this compound suggest starting with 25mg/day, with some people needing up to 75mg/day. With so much interest in CBD, it has been challenging to advise people as, to date, there have been no clinical trials of CBD to treat insomnia, depression, or anxiety. In the twenty-

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five highest quality studies, the doses were generally much larger, 300-900mg. When it comes to CBD, absence of evidence doesn't mean it won't help, but it prevents a specific dosing recommendation.

- If you try or regularly use CBD, I do recommend you spend the time to find a high quality product that is tested for contaminants and lists the concentrations of CBD and other cannabinoids (CBG, CBN, etc) to best understand what works for you and to minimize risk. Another option is to work with a medical cannabis practitioner if you live in a state in which that is available.
- [Cannabidiol in Anxiety and Sleep: A Large Case Series](#)
- [Dosage, Efficacy and Safety of Cannabidiol Administration in Adults: A Systematic Review of Human Trials](#)
- **Soporific Herbs and Teas:** Tea has been used throughout human history to impact our mental health and some research suggests regular tea consumption can improve mood. While today people most often consume caffeinated teas, there are many teas that are saporific, meaning sleep inducing. Tea can be a great part of a nighttime ritual and these options provide natural compounds to help us sleep as well as the signal to slow down and reflect.
 - [Effects of an intervention with drinking chamomile tea on sleep quality and depression in sleep disturbed postnatal women: a randomized controlled trial](#)
 - [Investigation effect of oral chamomilla on sleep quality in elderly people in Isfahan: A randomized control trial](#)
 - [Mechanisms Underlying the Anti-Depressive Effects of Regular Tea Consumption](#)

Lavender scents:

- Lavender aromatherapy has been shown to improve sleep quality in a number of small clinical trials. The main components of lavender essential oil are linalyl acetate and linalool, which are both absorbed into the bloodstream. Linalool is a terpene that is known to interact with serotonin receptors in the brain, which may explain its calming effect.
- [Lavender and the Nervous System](#)
- [Effects of lavender aromatherapy on insomnia and depression in women college students](#)
- [Effect of Inhaled Lavender and Sleep Hygiene on Self-Reported Sleep Issues: A Randomized Controlled Trial](#)

Glycine:

- This might be one to try if you 3g before bed.
- [Understanding Glycine](#)
- [New Therapeutic Strategy for Amino Acid Medicine: Glycine Improves the Quality of Sleep](#)

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Valerian Root:

- A meta-analysis of 16 studies concluded that Valerian root could improve subjective sleep quality, but not objective measures of sleep. Prior studies have been inconclusive. It could be helpful.
- [Effectiveness of Valerian on insomnia: A meta-analysis of randomized placebo-controlled trials](#)

L-Theanine

- This non-sedating amino acid has been used for anxiety and there is some evidence it can be helpful with insomnia. L-theanine has been studied for promoting sleep for patients with depression with positive findings. The general recommended dose is 200-250mg.
- [In Search of a Safe Natural Sleep Aid](#)
- [Effects of chronic L-theanine administration in patients with major depressive disorder: an open-label study](#)