

SLEEP AND PAIN

MEDICAL SLEEP ISSUES

When you can't sleep , you can't heal. The best habits in the world and a bucket of melatonin won't make up for a medical issue. There are problems that can stop you from sleeping and they should be ruled out if you're not sleeping.

Sleep Apnea:

As you sleep, the soft tissues at the back of your throat relax and can start "flapping in the breeze", causing snoring. If they get slack enough, they can block off the airflow to your windpipe. The same thing happens if the tongue relaxes towards the back of the throat, blocking your airflow. When either happens, not only do you stop snoring – **YOU STOP BREATHING.** This temporary stoppage in breathing while you sleep is called **sleep apnea**. When your oxygen level gets low enough, your nervous system triggers a partial waking (back up to Alpha with you!), depriving you of restorative Delta sleep.

Alpha Delta Sleep (alpha spikes in the delta phase):

For some, when they land in DELTA PHASE, they throw an ALPHA spike and shoot back up to ALPHA PHASE. Alpha-Theta-Alpha-Theta-Alpha...No Delta, no dreaming, no healing. A significant number of people with Fibromyalgia and Chronic Fatigue Syndrome have Alpha-Delta Sleep.

ACID REFLUX

At least 1 in 4 people with sleep apnea also have acid reflux. To have either condition can significantly reduce the quality of your life, but to have both is absolutely overwhelming.

GALLBLADDER

Issues with the gallbladder classically wake you up at 2-3 AM. Like clockwork!

If you are not sleeping, have your doctor check you for these medical issues.

Medical Disclaimer

The material in this flyer is provided for educational and informational purposes only and is not intended as medical advice. The statements enclosed in this book have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. The information should not be used to diagnose, cure, treat or prevent any illness, metabolic disorder, hormonal condition, disease or health problem or replace the advice of your treating physician or health care provider. Always consult your physician or health care provider before beginning any nutrition or exercise program. Use of the information contained is at the sole choice and risk of the reader. The views and health, fitness and nutritional advice expressed by Cheryl Wardlaw are not intended to be a substitute for conventional medical service. If you have a severe medical condition, see your physician or health care provider of choice.

Suggested Readings

- Costello RB et al.** The effectiveness of melatonin for promoting healthy sleep: a rapid evidence assessment of the literature. *Nutr J.* 2014 Nov 7;13(1):106
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- Doghramji K.** Sleep extension in sleepy individuals reduces pain sensitivity: New evidence regarding the complex, reciprocal relationship between sleep and pain. *Sleep.* 2012 Dec 1;35(12):1587-1588.
- Engström M et al.** Sleep quality, arousal and pain thresholds in tension-type headache: A blinded controlled polysomnographic study. *Cephalalgia.* 2013 Dec 23.
- Gellis LA, Lichstein KL.** Sleep hygiene practices of good and poor sleepers in the United States: an internet-based study. *Behav Ther* 2009 Mar;40(1):1-9.
- Orlandi AC et al.** Improvement in pain, fatigue, and subjective sleep quality through sleep hygiene tips in patients with fibromyalgia. *Rev Bras Rheumatol.* 2012 Oct;52



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THE ESSENTIAL LINK OF SLEEPING, HEALING AND PAIN

By Cheryl Wardlaw PT MMSc CFMT



The Sleep Cycle

The body heals while you are asleep.

Sleep is not as simple as the time between when you close your eyes at night and when the bell rings in the morning. Sleep has phases.

The Sleep Cycle starts with the **Alpha Phase**, called restful wakefulness. It is kind of the “hover” phase, where you stare at the clock, almost asleep. Next, you drop into the **Theta** Phase where you are finally “out”.

The third and most important level is the Delta Phase, where your body’s tissues heal from the micro trauma of the day. You don’t stay in Delta very long before you sink into the **REM** Phase, where you dream. Then it’s back up to Alpha and you start all over again.

The longer you are asleep, the more Delta healing phases you drop into. To reduce your inflammation and pain, you need to go to sleep **AND** stay asleep. The price of bad sleep habits, keeping late nights and lack of melatonin could be **SUSTAINED INFLAMMATION & PAIN**. Micro-trauma adds up across time, but you can turn things around with the right battle plan.

WHEN YOU CAN’T SLEEP

For 20 million Americans, insomnia slowly changes bedtime from yummy sleep time into this long drawn out “staring at the clock” time. Interesting enough, 75% of fibromyalgia folks have insomnia! The following symptoms are indications of insomnia: - hard to fall asleep -frequently waking up - hard to get back to sleep -tired in the morning -sleepy during the day -irritability -hard to concentrate .

For every adult on the planet, we need 8-9 hours every night to heal our tissues. If you have insomnia, you are going to have to change your sleep habits to conquer that demon. Given that we slowly get ourselves into bad habits, it will take some time to get yourself “reprogrammed” back into a sleeping person.

GOOD SLEEP HABITS

*** You know when you have to get up, so go to bed 8 hours before that.** You should go to bed the same time every night, 7 days per week. When you are in PAIN, sleep is a whole lot more important than “getting things done”, partying, watching TV, working on the computer, etc.

*** Stop using your bedroom for anything but the sleeping.** You should not do **ANYTHING** in your bedroom other than SLEEP and, well, YOU know. Cart the TV, computer, newspaper, and files from work right out of there.

*** Your bedroom should be a hibernation cave: dark, cool and quiet.** Install light blocking blinds. Cool is as important as dark. At night, lower the temperature down to 70. Use a cooling mattress cover if you must. Use “cool” pillows. **KEEP COOL.** Finally, quiet. This is where you have to get everyone on the same page. The family has to be **QUIET!**

*** Be VERY careful what you do for TWO to SIX hours before you go to bed.** Do not eat within 2 hours of bedtime. Do not exercise within 4 hours of your sleep time. Do not take in caffeine or alcohol, and do not smoke within 6 hours of bedtime. I’m not kidding. You also need “wind down time”. **DO NOT** watch TV or be on the computer or play video games right up until bed-time. You know good and well after a TV thriller, you are not dropping off to sleep. If I may be so bold, may I recommend reading a good book.

*** If you don’t fall asleep within 30 minutes, get back up.** Nothing makes your bedroom a torture chamber like twisting and turning and watching the time roll by. Get back up and read something BORING. When you are sleepy, back down you go. It may take a week or so to change things around, but I promise you, it works.

*** Finally, don’t forget melatonin!** Your body should be producing melatonin 30-60 minutes before bedtime. Production is triggered by darkness. But when we live in lighted cities, watch TV and work on the computer up until bedtime— **WE DON’T MAKE ENOUGH MELATONIN.**

You can take a melatonin tablet. They are well processed by the body and 3-5 mg is a typical dose. You could take melatonin naturally by taking 2 tablespoons of Cherry Concentrate 30-60 minutes before bedtime. 12 cherries is about 3mg of melatonin.

CAUTION, CHERRIES ACT AS A BLOOD THINNER (SIMILAR TO A BABY ASPRIN), SO DO NOT USE IF YOU ARE ON BLOOD THINNERS.

