

Heal Your Hormones

Refining Sleep

Sleep can be elusive even when we feel like we're doing all the right things. Poor sleep is "vata" out of balance - the "king" of doshas - the Ayurvedic body type that's like a blueprint outlining the innate tendencies that have been built into your system.

Here are some tips to figuring out how to get more Zzzzzzzs more of the time.

Signs of "vata" out of balance:

- Overstimulated
- Exhaustion (excitement turns to exhaustion)
- Feeling of frazzled and nervous
- Out of rhythm with your body
- Instead of setting the proper rhythms in your body with eating, sleeping and exercising regularly you may have been someone who grabbed food when you were hungry, skipped meals, exercised in fits and starts and went to bed at odd hours.
- Haphazard does not equal exciting or stimulating!

The KEY is to begin to cultivate balanced habits, becoming more and more regular every day.

Overview - "Regularity" is Key:

- Morning routine
- Evening routine
- Daytime routine
- Sleep environment
- Bladder health
- Eat Your Way to Better Sleep

Heal Your Hormones

- Check the Checklist!
- Watch the Sleep Module
- Digestive health
- Brain chemistry balance

Morning Routine

The way you do your morning is the way you do the rest of the day...and how your night will go.

- Morning meditation can provide mental rest and stability to balance the body
- Massage your body with sesame oil in the morning before your long, warm bath or shower.

Evening (Nighttime) Routine

Your evening routine sets you up for sleep success.

- Stop eating 3 hours before bed (by 7pm is best)
- Begin getting ready for bed two hours before by turning off technology, and bright lights - you don't want to confuse your body's internal clock(s).
- Wear blue light-blocking glasses
- Read, write, stretch or do calming activities

Daytime Routine

How you "do" your day is how your night will go. A flowing day = a flowing night!

- Eat for hormone balance
- Schedule breaks in your day - stop and rest for five minutes when you're feeling pushed or are overdoing
- Drink plenty of water to stay hydrated

Heal Your Hormones

- Move to get the blood flowing and burn cortisol - you have to be tired to sleep (but not overtired as in tired and wired)

Sleep Environment

The ambiance and feeling of your bedroom is very important.

- NO lights of any kind
- If anything is plugged in it needs to be at least six feet away from your head and all light blocked
- No night lights
- Non toxic pillows, mattress, bedding/sheets, etc.
- 65 degrees or so - too warm and it's a deal-breaker for women - the body needs to cool down to heal during the night
- Weighted blanket might be helpful 10-15 lbs.
- Noise-free (may need to use earplugs)
- Sleeping on your side is best (left and right each have advantages) - make sure your pillow supports this way of sleeping
- Lift the front of your bed up a few inches for better sleep hygiene
- Make your bedroom a beautiful, relaxing place to be.
- Women need to feel safe to completely let go at night.

Bladder Health

- Having to get up and go to the bathroom during the night can cause restless sleep.
- Most of the time we wake up first and then decide you have to pee...
- But if you're finding that you have a real sense of urgency during the night you may have a low grade bladder infection. Use UT Intensive Chewables or UT Synergy for a month to knock it out...along with some form of citrate like magnesium citrate or potassium or calcium citrate to alkalinize the urine.

Heal Your Hormones

- Use Yoni Oil or Julva cream on your pelvic floor to balance hormones there - the urethra will shorten with poor hormone balance and cause more of a sense of urgency to pee.

Eat Your Way to Better Sleep (see handout)

- Your brain uses a lot of energy while you're sleeping for critical resting, healing, and repairing functions.
- Eat for hormone balance with plenty of protein.
- Eat some carbs for dinner to help serotonin get across the blood-brain barrier
- Higher doses of fish oil or krill oil before bed can be helpful.
- 1 tablespoon of **raw** honey right before bed on an empty stomach can help with liver glycogen stores - with a very low carb diet your liver glycogen stores can get depleted and this will raise cortisol at night keeping you awake.
- Use ginger to stimulate the appetite
- Stick to warm, cooked foods
- Drink lots of warm fluids throughout the day - you can try Vata herb tea - try four cups/day (licorice, cardamom, cinnamon, ginger) - or grating a teaspoon of fresh ginger into a pint thermos bottle and filling it with hot water.
- Teas for sleep: lemon balm, sleepy time tea, etc.

Random Tips

- Stay warm during the day and evening but with enough humidity, and avoid drafts.
- Avoid overstimulation: loud music, violent movies, long hours of TV
- No alcohol while you're trying to fix your sleep and no caffeine, even tea.
- Left nostril breathing is calming and cooling

Heal Your Hormones

Nutrients for Sleep

- 5HTP helps to build serotonin
- L-tryptophan w/B6 helps to build serotonin
- Magnesium
- Liver support
- Hormone balance with estrogen/progesterone and also cortisol
- PS 150 (phosphatidylserine) or Seriphos
- Myosedate (sedating herbs)
- NeuroCalm caps or Liposomal
- Insomnitrol chewables or caps
- Trimag Supreme Night (california poppy, lavender, cherry)
- Glycine: relaxing, calming
- Inositol: supports overall relaxation