



Solutions for Better Sleep (Beyond Sleep Hygiene)

Message from Milly

Greetings on this beautifully mild summer day.

Today we'll talk about one of the biggest (and most ignored) epidemics facing nearly every household: lack of sleep in adults and children.

You've probably heard the statistics, but here's a refresher:

Per the CDC 1 in 3 American adults doesn't get enough sleep, * and the American Academy of Pediatrics estimates 25-50% of preschoolers and up to 40% of adolescents are in the same boat.**

So what's going on?

There are a lot of things that can disrupt your sleep, from light and technology, to infections, foods, stress, and more.

Today, we'll break down a few of the more common causal factors behind mysterious sleep ailments plus offer some simple solutions for a better night's rest.

Blessings to all,

-Milly

P.S. How much sleep do you or your children need? [Click here to see the official recommendations from the Sleep Foundation.](#) And keep in mind, these are general guidelines. You may need more or slightly less sleep depending on your health, stress levels, daily routine, etc.

References:

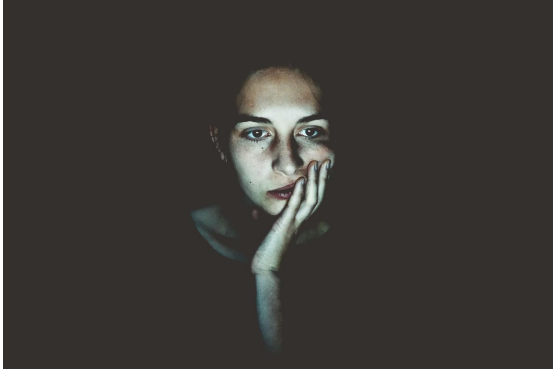
*<https://www.cdc.gov/media/releases/2016/p0215-enough-sleep.html>

**<https://pedsinreview.aappublications.org/content/32/3/91.long>



**The Inconvenient Facts on
Technology and Sleep Health**

Endless articles on improving sleep recommend things



like avoiding caffeine after noon, taking a warm bath before bed, and sleeping in a cold room.

And although these are great tips, I'd suggest we need to start putting much more emphasis on how our technology habits affect sleep.

Thankfully, this phenomenon now has a name: [screen time insomnia](#). And it's particularly of concern for teens and young adults.

According to new research, the negative effects of technology on sleep are (at least) 3-fold:

#1: Blue light emitted from screens suppresses the release of melatonin, your master sleep hormone.*

#2: Spending time on a device, especially right before bed, tells your brain it's time to wake up vs. wind down.**

#3: Excess time spent on screens, especially social media, is associated with depression, anxiety, stress, and other mental health ailments that contribute to sleep problems, and vice versa.***

However, the reality is most of us need technology to make a living, run our lives, study, etc. So, we must find ways to create a healthier relationship with our tech tools.

Here are three practical and doable ways to accomplish this:

#1: Wear daytime and nighttime blue blockers any time you're on a screen. This will reduce the amount of blue light exposure and thus, improve melatonin levels naturally. [Techwellness.com](#) has a nice selection of styles for adults and children (and great additional content on striking a better tech/health balance).

#2: Give yourself the gift of unplugging from technology 1-2 hours before bed. Read, meditate, write, journal, talk to your spouse, kids, or partner just stay away from your devices.

#3: Don't sleep with your phone in your bedroom! EMF radiation concerns aside (though is a concern we'll address in a future newsletter), by creating some distance between you and your device you remove the temptation to scroll in bed.

References:

[*https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30311830/](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30311830/)

10 Common Causal Factors Behind Sleep Issues

Often, chronic sleep issues are actually a symptom of something else going on in the body or mind.

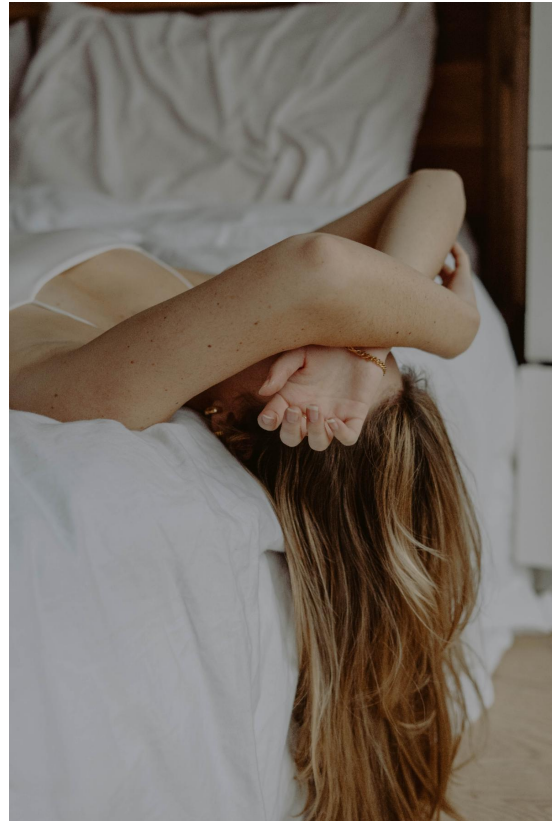
If you've tried all the basics of [sleep hygiene](#) and have addressed the technology piece BUT are still unable to sleep, it's time to dig deeper.

While every person's health is different, here are some of the energetic causal factors that often co-exist with sleep issues:

1. **Chronic infections** create neurotoxins that affect the nervous system causing a stimulating effect. They can also impact other organs and systems essential to sleep, such as the thyroid, adrenals, and gut.
2. **Hormonal imbalances**, in men and women. Monthly cycles, menopause, and andropause can all cause sleep disruptions. And often, detoxifying the liver helps tremendously!
3. **Thyroid issues**, both underactive and overactive. Keep in mind, thyroid issues are often overlooked or missed in routine physicals.
4. **Adrenal fatigue/HPA axis dysfunction** can create adrenal surges that keep you up or wake you up at night.
5. **Chronic stress** can cause uncontrollable worry, create adrenal surges, imbalance hormones, and undermine your gut/digestive health.
6. **Food sensitivities** can cause digestive discomfort and disrupt neurotransmitter function, both of which can impact sleep.
7. **EMF sensitivity** can be an issue for some, especially kids and those whose bedrooms are close to EMF devices (Smart Meters, Wi-Fi routers, smart devices, etc.).
8. **Trauma/unresolved grief** can cause worry, nightmares, night-waking, tax the adrenals, etc.
9. **Blood sugar crashes** can wake you up in the middle of the night.
10. **Poor gut health/leaky gut/digestive issues** are an extremely common cause of sleep problems. The main reason being, your gut houses the majority of your body's serotonin, which is a precursor for melatonin.

If you suspect your trouble sleeping may be chronic, it's worth looking into the possibility of a deeper cause.

Given the risk-factors of chronic lack of sleep (cognitive ailments, heart disease, mood disorders, gut health ailments, obesity, etc.) it's not something you want to put off.



My Favorite Natural Remedies for Sleepless Nights

Many people put off getting help for their sleep problems because they're afraid of sleep medication.



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All the links to products are provided for educational purposes and are not affiliate links.

And frankly, I don't blame them. The side effects of prescription sleep aids are pretty scary. Plus, none of them are approved for long-term use and don't address the *cause* of your problem (which was never a lack of sleep medication!).

However, there are some wonderful natural remedies and lifestyle choices that can help you with occasional sleeplessness.

Supplements:

- **Energetix Melatonin Spray**, this is great for travel and helping you fall asleep faster. Of all the melatonin products I've tried throughout the years, this is still the best.
- **Neuroscience Alpha GABA PM**, if you like Kavinace (now discontinued...so sad) this is its replacement. It helps promote sleep by nourishing your calming neurotransmitters, like GABA.
- **Pure Encapsulation Best Rest**, a well-rounded blend of time-tested sedative herbs like passionflower and lemon balm, combined with L-Theanine and GABA to promote sleep.

We stock all these at the office, so [email us](#) if you'd like to place an order or have a question.

Lifestyle changes:

- **Praying or meditating** right before bed can have a profound impact on your sleep.* For meditation, check out apps like Headspace, which have specific programs just for sleep.
- **Journaling** is a great way to shut down your brain before bed. There's no wrong way to do this, but research has found that writing out your to-do list for the next day is especially powerful.** Regardless, whatever you need to get out of your head, grab and journal and get writing.
- **Eating a little protein before bed** can help prevent blood sugar crashes that cause night waking. A handful of nuts, a cup of Greek yogurt, or a small protein shake is plenty.
- **Getting grounded** by walking around barefoot, gardening, swimming in natural water, or using a grounding mat has also been proven to help improve sleep, reduce stress and cortisol, and reduce pain***. It works by helping balance out your body's electrical systems with the earth's natural grounding electrons. [Dr. Axe wrote a nice piece on it you can access here](#) if you'd like to learn more.

References:

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/mindfulness-meditation-helps-fight-insomnia-improves-sleep-201502187726>

**<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29058942/>

***<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15650465/>