



Best Sleep practices in Ayurveda

Sleep is the natural response to balance in the body's digestive, nervous, and endocrine systems. By addressing the state of this, we assure that we are addressing the cause of your distress. Creating an optimal environment for you to sleep every night and wake feeling rested and refreshed in the morning is very important in Ayurveda.

- Avoid/limit sensory stimulation throughout the day. Become self-aware of when sensory stimulation has become a stressor and balance that with calming sensory input.
- Avoid/limit use of stimulants. Become self-aware of when one is creating dependency on their stimulant of choice. This is a hard cycle to break and requires a few days of fatigue to give the body time to remove all the excess adenosine we have built up.
- Take largest meal at midday and avoid eating after sundown. The digestive system and the liver need to be free during sleep to reset the body for the next day. Undigested

food or a liver that has to focus on digestion over metabolism will become sluggish and leave us feeling exhausted in the morning.

- Follow beneficial daily routines including asana, pranayama, meditation to contain Prana and better deal with daily stresses.
- Spend time in nature daily, reset circadian rhythm to restore balanced melatonin production.
- Establish nighttime routines that signal the onset of sleep to increase melatonin production and support easy transition from waking to sleep.

Some really important points while looking at sleep are:

1) Elimination

- Constipation may cause insomnia

2) Agni Regulation (digestion, the key in all Ayurveda treatments)

- The digestive system is the entry point in the body for the nutrition that will support the creation of the necessary neurotransmitters and hormones for all body functions, including sleep.
- Once the elimination is balanced or concurrent to treatment for regulating elimination, we will begin to work on Agni regulation via food choices, food habits, regular mealtimes, and culinary spicing.
- Establish regular meal times and a diet of whole, fresh, organic foods whenever possible.
- Reduce/eliminate caffeine in any form other than green tea.
- Restore the health of your gut by including pre-biotic foods and beverages and reducing/eliminating processed, packaged, and highly acidifying foods from the diet.
- Restore the gut flora by introducing probiotics via supplement or food. (If the probiotic population was previously decimated due to poor diet, inoculate the gut with supplement probiotics for a time before relying solely on food to maintain the gut flora)
- Increase foods that will introduce the necessary precursors for neurotransmitter formation. This includes foods rich in tryptophan and magnesium.