

8 TIPS FOR BETTER QUALITY SLEEP

More and more research is being done on the health benefits of sleep and evidence is mounting that it's imperative to prioritize good sleep in order to have good health. Working on your sleep habits and circadian rhythms is a MUST, in particular if you're busy and feeling overwhelmed let alone if you have symptoms of adrenal fatigue. So here are my top tips for good sleep that are easy to implement, inexpensive and can make a huge difference to your life.

1. Take magnesium bisglycinate

Magnesium is known as the "anti-stress mineral". It can make a huge difference to your ability to fall asleep and stay asleep. Problem is, about 70% of people in North America are deficient in it. Things that can readily deplete magnesium stores include alcohol, sugar and stress. Taking it in powder or liquid form is best I find. I take 400mg at night, before I go to bed.

2. Use lemon balm, chamomile and holy basil

These are my favourite calming herbs at the moment. I take lemon balm and chamomile as tinctures and as teas and I take holy basil (also known as Tulsi) as a tea. Holy basil is what's known as an "adaptogen"; a compound that's able to prevent the physical and chemical effects of stress. [Do not take holy basil if you are trying to conceive, are pregnant or breastfeeding].

3. Burn lavender essential oil

An oldie, but a goodie. I burn lavender essential oil in my nebulizer in my bedroom and I find it significantly enhances my state of calm and peace as I fall asleep.

4. Install F.lux

This is a great tool to use if you *have* to be on your computer at night. Ideally you should get off your computer 2 hours before bed, but leading up to these 2 hours, or if you must be on your computer later in the night for whatever reason, I suggest you install F.lux. It changes your blue-light screen to an orange hue in the evening hours, which won't mess with your melatonin levels as much.

5. Screens down, 2 hours before bed

Like I said above, even better than F.lux is getting off all your devices 2 hours before you go to bed. This one tip can make a huge difference to your sleep quality. Blue light that's emitted from screens reduces melatonin, which is our sleep hormone, (and is also an important anti-cancer hormone too!).

6. Read an old fashioned book

This is maybe one of the easiest and most enjoyable ways to increase your sleep quality. For me, it took a good book to get me off my iPhone before bed and I actually look forward to heading upstairs to read now.

7. Try out yoga nidra meditation

Yoga nidra is a form of meditation that aims to balance the body. Trust me, it's one of the most relaxing things you can do. You needn't fret about having to self direct yourself to "quiet your mind" because yoga nidra is a guided meditation in which all you have to do is follow the audio prompts whilst lying down. Google "yoga nidra" on the internet, (there are tons of free recordings out there) and do one before bed to achieve a deep state of rest and relaxation.

8. Try these powerful breathing techniques

One of the only things that's helped to alleviate my stress symptom that manifests in my throat, neck and jaw is a type of Kundalini yoga breathing called "breathe of fire". This, plus Pranayama breathing (also known as "alternate nostril breathing") is hugely beneficial in reducing stress and getting you out of a sympathetic (stressed) and into a para-sympathetic (relaxed) nervous state. Google these breathing techniques and try them out to see which works best for you before bed.

