

# The Top 12 Herbs, Minerals, and Vitamins That Help You Sleep

There are as many reasons that people can't sleep as there are sleepless people. First determine what specifically is keeping *you* awake, and then look into vitamins that help you sleep, as well as herbs and minerals. Because there are as many natural options for restful sleep as there are soundly sleeping people.



## SOME COMMON REASONS FOR DIFFICULTY SLEEPING

Insomnia can be a nightmare. Inadequate sleep may make you irritable, could reduce your productivity, and in the long run, may be damaging to your well-being. Difficulty sleeping can be due to any number of reasons:

- Anxiety
- Stress
- Side effects of drugs

- Allergies
- Jet lag
- Too much alcohol, caffeine, or sugar
- A snoring partner
- Smoking
- Shift work
- Lack of exercise
- Cramps or restlessness

## **HERBS, MINERALS, AND VITAMINS THAT MAY HELP YOU SLEEP**

A great night's rest helps keep up your energy throughout the day and is good for your overall health. If you struggle to get the sleep your body needs, consider these 12 sleep-supporting supplements.

### **1) Magnesium**

Known for its ability to help people relax, magnesium is a natural way to calm down and prepare for sleep. The mineral [may help reduce stimulation of the stress hormone cortisol](#), which may keep you from falling asleep. Magnesium is found in dark leafy greens, seeds, nuts, fish, legumes, and whole grains.

### **2) Vitamin B6**

Water-soluble vitamin B6 is found in a wide variety of foods: chickpeas, bananas, nuts, spinach, squash, and rice. It is needed for the production of serotonin and melatonin, a hormone that influences the circadian rhythm and the body's sleep-wake cycle.

### **3) Valerian root**

Valerian is an herbal extract that's been well established in helping ease tension and promoting healthful sleep.

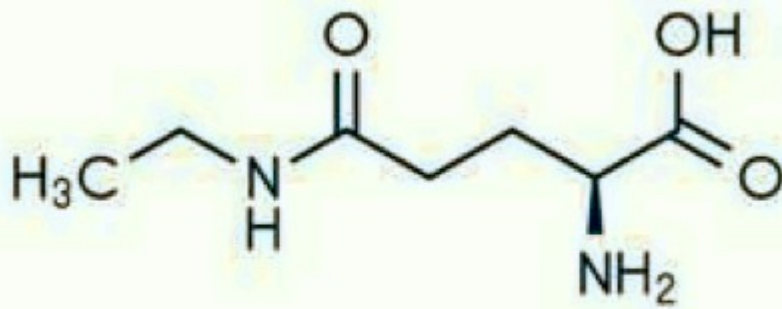
#### 4) Chamomile

Chamomile is believed to have a calming effect on the body. In herbal medicine, it is often used as a mild sedative to help soothe nerves and [reduce anxiety](#).



#### 5) L-theanine

L-theanine is an amino acid that relaxes without sedating, which is why it may help you fall asleep faster. L-theanine elevates the level of another amino acid, gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), which creates feelings of peacefulness. Similarly, L-theanine appears to [enhance the release of alpha waves](#) in the brain, which are associated with daydreaming and meditation. It is naturally found in tea and some mushrooms, and can also be gotten from supplements, such as RECHARGE HEALTH™ blissful sleep, an all-natural formulation that also contains magnesium, valerian root, 5-HTP (read on for more on that) and other natural ingredients known to promote restful sleep. Always consult your doctor before taking any supplement.



theanine

## 5) 5-HTP

5-HTP (5-hydroxytryptophan) helps the body produce serotonin, which influences sleep and the sleep-wake cycle. 5-HTP has been [shown to promote relaxation](#) and ease stress and anxiety. It is naturally occurring in some medicinal plants. Your body is able to produce 5-HTP from tryptophan in your diet.

## 7) Vitamin D

The so-called “sunshine vitamin” is thought to affect both sleep length and quality. Various studies have demonstrated that a [vitamin D deficiency is associated with sleep problems](#). Your everyday need for vitamin D can be fulfilled with some sunlight exposure. More exposure may be necessary if you’re African-American, over age 50, or live in a cloudy location. In addition to the vitamin D that comes from exposing skin to sunlight, you can also find the vitamin in foods like egg yolks and fatty fish.

## 8) Melatonin

Melatonin is a hormone produced by the body that affects the [sleep-wake cycle](#). Light impacts melatonin production: The hormone’s levels stay high throughout the night, when it is

dark, and fall in the morning, after sunrise. Minimal amounts of melatonin are present in meat, vegetables, and fruit. It is also available as a nutritional supplement – an option often used to deal with insomnia and jet lag. Many people already produce all the melatonin that their bodies need, making supplementation ineffective.

## 9) Iron

An iron deficiency is associated with [restless leg syndrome](#), which can lead to disrupted sleep. Iron-rich foods include nuts, liver, dark chocolate, beef, beans, legumes, whole grains, and dark leafy greens; you can also take iron supplements.

## 10) Hops

Hops extract has a long-standing use in traditional herbal medicine for treating mild symptoms of mental stress and as a sleep aid.

## 11) Lemon balm

Lemon balm extract is used for restlessness or insomnia due to mental stress in traditional herbal medicine.

## 12) Passionflower

Passionflower extract is an herbal extract used for generations to help relieve mild stress and support sleep.

# WAYS YOU CAN SLEEP BETTER

Simple changes in your sleep environment can go a long way to help ensure restful sleep:

- **Put away the devices.** Cut back on using tech, like the TV and your phone, before going to bed. These emit blue light, which can suppress the production of melatonin. And keep them at least 3 feet away from you while you

are sleeping.

- **Cool it down.** Maintain the temperature in your bedroom at or below 70 degrees Fahrenheit. [According to the National Sleep Foundation](#), the best temperature for sleep is between 60 and 67 – anything cooler or hotter may result in restlessness.
- **Turn the lights down low.** Close your bedroom door, eliminate night-lights, and avoid turning on any lights during the night. If you really need a light source, install low-blue bulbs in your bedroom and bathroom. These emit an amber light that will limit the disturbance of the production of melatonin.
- **Use curtains or blackout shades to create total darkness.** The smallest amount of light can interrupt your pineal gland's production of melatonin.

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU WAKE UP IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT



Staying in bed while fretting about falling asleep will just keep you awake, so if you are not able to sleep soundly, get out of bed, go into another room, and do something relaxing until you are sleepy. That means don't read anything related

to work or watch a stimulating TV show. Keep any bright lights off, as they can make your body think it is time to wake up. In fact, try not to turn on any lights at all, unless it is necessary. When you get sleepy, that's when you go back to your bed.