

# Anxiety Busters!

## The Natural Alternative

Anxiety Busters eBook “How To” Series

## *How To Overcome INSOMNIA*

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There aren't very many people who *haven't* experienced insomnia at some time in their lives. We live a fast paced existence, in the wake of terrorism, wars and upsets...and what do we watch just before bedtime...THE ELEVEN O'CLOCK NEWS! Not the greatest bedtime story and certainly not the most relaxing way to end your day.

No, we cannot avoid all tension and stress in life. We generally are inundated with many stressful events during the day. Our emotions run the gamut and we often relive these events while lying in bed. We wonder how we **could have** reacted to certain situations and how we **should have** handled it. This type of thinking begins to spiral until sleep eludes us for hours and a racing mind takes over.

The clock ticks on, and restlessness leads to frustration. Frustration leads to increased tension, adrenaline flow, and before we know it the alarm is going off and it is time to start the day. We begin this new day thinking one fearful thought, ***“What if I cannot fall asleep again tonight?”***

We have already set the stage for continued insomnia. Tiredness only enhances anxiety symptoms and the need for sleep takes on a sense of urgency.

Unfortunately fear fuel the cycle of insomnia. One begins to unconsciously fall into the trap of self-sabotage. Every thought begins with those two little words... **"what if," concerning** their sleep requirements. Fear of **not** sleeping becomes your habit, as thoughts turn inward, focusing upon how tired and tense you feel...wondering how much longer you could possibly go without a decent night's sleep.

This is the time to stop and **regroup**. This is the time for explanation of where you are going "off track" and understanding how to correct self-sabotaging sleep patterns. It's time to let go of the fears and the habit of self-sabotage. Thoughts dictate our reactions. New patterns and behaviors are easily accomplished with the proper guidance. You too will find yourself naturally achieving better sleep patterns without the tense struggle. It's is not difficult and will become a natural part of your life, once you understand what is necessary to achieve a restful night's sleep, and continue to do so.

## **Signs of Insomnia**

You probably have an insomnia problem if you find yourself:

- 1- Dreading the struggle of "trying" to fall asleep each night.
- 2- Counting the hours that seem to pass so quickly.
- 3- Frustrated through what seems to be long and endless nights
- 4- Waking exhausted and feeling tense and tired all day.
- 5- Waking during the night and unable to fall back to sleep.

Clearly your sleep problem is interfering with your life, but all is not lost. The majority of insomnia difficulties are temporary. They will easily dissolve once acknowledged and the proper coping skills applied. The body is eager to sleep once you learn how to step out of your own way.

The goal is to achieve a restful night's sleep and wake up feeling refreshed, without the need for sedation and the hangover, which accompanies many medications.

## **Circadian Rhythms**

Your body follows a set pattern, every day and night. The body thrives on structure and routine. The body operates best on a daily schedule, which includes, eating, sleeping, eliminating and living in general. Your body clock or biological clock is referred to as your circadian rhythm.

Often, our patterns or rhythms are interrupted, due to unavoidable circumstances. An illness, change in work hours, vacation, move or career change.

Even a change in eating habits may affect our body clock or circadian rhythms.

Creature of habit, the body functions best on routine and strives to return to a schedule in order to achieve optimum functioning. The body craves habit and will signal a need for return when thrown off. Optimum performance requires proper sleep, nutrition and elimination. Temporary change in this structure is not harmful, but less than satisfactory for feeling one's best.

There are ways to maintain good sleep patterns and stave off insomnia. They are not difficult and with a little practice, they become internalized and a normal part of routine living. As you may have noticed, small children and animals generally achieve a good night's sleep. This is because they have not been introduced to the habit of worry. Without worry and stimulating substances, sleep is much more attainable.

## Methods

The path to a good night's sleep begins in the morning. Your daily schedule reflects how you will sleep at night. Your choices during the day have a profound affect on your sleep patterns.

### **Avoidance of stimulants:**

Caffeine- Coffee, Tea, Dark Chocolate, and Certain Medications

Nicotine- Cigarettes

Excessive Sugars- Simple Carbohydrates, Cakes, Candy, Sweets in excess.

The body is geared to soundly at sleep at night and this is always attainable if one becomes conscious of the decisions and choices they make during the day.

In order to avoid insomnia and maintain a good sleep pattern, one must adhere to certain principles.

The **worry habit** is a strong pattern that must be acknowledged and then **broken**.

Instead of worrying about lack of sleep, it is important to realize that occasional sleep loss, (although not always comfortable), will **not** harm you. Your body will always catch up on sleep if you learn to move out of your own way. Your thoughts are part of the problem and part of the solution. You have a great deal of power over lack of sleep, once you learn to re-direct your thoughts and attitude. With every "**what if**" thought, concerning sleep, or lack thereof, you are adding extra stress and tension to the situation. Your frustration is manifested in excess adrenaline, which is energy. You are fueling your inability to sleep by lamenting over your inability to fall asleep in the first place. It becomes a vicious cycle. Learning to change your approach makes all the difference in the world. It places you back in control of your life, with the ability to relax and gently fall asleep, without the necessity of prescription sleeping aids.

When fearful thoughts or worries enter the mind, it's time to STOP and make a choice. It's time to learn to turn off the interfering thoughts and shift into another pattern. It's important to allow your entire body to go limp, loose and sink into the bed. After a day filled with moderate OUTDOOR exercise (in oxygen), the diet we have included with this eBook, and the meditative skills we included on the cd/tape, you will find your mind easily quiets as you slip off to a restful sleep. Before going to sleep at night, take a few minutes to do the meditation exercise. This will quiet your body, relax your muscles and settle down the mind. Drifting off to sleep will become a logical sequence of events. The mind and body is ready for sleep. Your only job is to follow the daily suggestions and meditative prescription, and sound sleep will be yours.

Remember, sleep, similar to a frightened kitten, will always sneak up on you when you stop trying to woo it. Give up “trying” so hard and give yourself permission NOT TO SLEEP, and watch how quickly sleep sneaks up on you... as gently as a kitten when not feverishly pursued.

### **Recipe for Restful Sleep:**

- (1) Moderate Exercise, early in the day. Twice daily if possible
- (2) Diet/Nutrition, Follow our plan, included with this ebook. Build Serotonin levels as you enjoy a healthy food plan.
- (3) Mind/Body Connection: Thoughts, Attitude and Learning to let go.
- (4) Natural Serotonin Production: Foods and moods. Use foods to work for you, rather than against you.
- (5) Melatonin Production- Melatonin will make you sleepy...and you have control over its production in your body.
- (6) Avoidance of Stimulants: You have choices about what you eat and how it affects you.
- (7) Attitude: attitude is everything.

### **Exercise and Sleep**

The human body thrives on exercise. If your body is not used, it will not experience a healthy feeling of sleepiness. Worry, on the other hand, creates a tired mind, which is very different from a tired body. One may feel exhausted from worry and still not sleep. This is because the mind is tired but **not** the body. Muscles need to be used during the day to relax at night. Blood needs to circulate during the day and metabolic rates need to be challenged. The heart needs to pump as energy flows through the body. This creates an active healthy body, and requires no more than moderate movement. A 20 minute walk a day, outdoors, will provide you with the minimum exercise required for a good night's rest. You might find you enjoy it so much that you choose to indulge yourself twice a day. All the better! With motion, we function on all cylinders, and we operate at peak performance. Without movement, sleep becomes difficult.

This is why the active body is relaxed as the day unfolds. Exercise not only promotes sleep but it also staves off anxious tensions which may plague many who do not burn off excess energy stored in the body.

### **Melatonin, the Natural Sleep Remedy**

The brain actually produces a chemical called Melatonin, which secretes when the sun goes down, resulting in sleepiness. Unfortunately, or fortunately for many, we live in a society where nighttime is merely a term. Electric lights have given us extra hours of daytime, and less Melatonin. This is why we often suggest lowering lights in the evening, especially if one expects to feel sleepy. Melatonin production halts when the eyes are subjected to bright light. If you must use the bathroom during the night, a small night-light is suggested rather than the harsh bright glare of an overhead light. You will have less difficulty returning to sleep if you are not exposed to a glaring light as suggested by Carol Hart in **Secrets of Serotonin**. Try turning down the lights as the evening progresses. This enables the body a slow wind down towards bedtime, as the body reacts to a softer light and greater melatonin production.

Foods high in tryptophan (listed in this ebook), which is the precursor for both Serotonin and Melatonin, will also aid in boosting this natural substance in the brain.

The foods we eat have a profound affect on us as well. They may make or break the insomnia habit. We have included the Insomnia Diet, 7 Day Menu Plan and Day Plan as a guide for those having difficulty sleeping.

### **Insomnia: Diet and Nutrition Prescription**

At one time or another, we all experience some sort of sleep difficulties. This is not uncommon and in fact, quite the norm. When we become **upset** or worried about this temporary interference, our body begins to produce stress hormones such as adrenaline. This adrenaline fuels the insomnia, leading to more restless or sleepless nights.

Going through the many “ups and downs” of menopause, with spiking hormones, can disrupt sleep. Hormonal changes are “temporary” but nonetheless, can be disruptive when sleep patterns are concerned.

The individual struggling with insomnia begins focusing on his/her **lack** of sleep and begins measuring sleep progress. The goal of maintaining a good

night's rest becomes inaccessible when so much attention focused on this issue. This concern demands his full attention, resulting in lack of concentration, difficulties relaxing and overall irritability.

***When will I sleep again?*** becomes the primary thought, contributing to more stress and tension.

Naturally, anything focused upon with such intensity and yearning has a tendency to slip further from one's grasp, until it truly does seem unreachable. Sleep, in particular, fits snugly in this category. The more intensely pursued, the more elusive it becomes to the person whose only wish at this point is a good night's rest. A few hours seem difficult at this point. Tension only serves to keep sleep at bay and fear sets in as the person becomes terribly worried thinking he will never enjoy a good night's sleep again. The pressure of falling asleep each night becomes irritating, upsetting and a source of fear.

Lack of sleep can lead to irritability, increased anxiety, lowered immune system, problem skin (acne), depression, feelings of lightheadedness, dizziness and weakness. Some with the anxiety condition state that lack of sleep seems to increase their symptoms.

Attitude is essential, when dealing with insomnia. Understanding, coping skills, a sound nutrition plan, and a few significant lifestyle changes will put an end to the frustration of temporary insomnia.

You have the power to take control of this temporary interruption in your life. Instead of falling into the medication trap, which often leads to tolerance, dependency or withdrawal symptoms, there are simple, effective methods readily available for obtaining a good night's rest. Proper diet/nutrition choices are essential for natural relief from insomnia and the frustration that accompanies this interference.

**Protein:** It is essential to have a protein with every meal during the day. Proteins, and foods rich in tryptophan (see below) are important and recommended during the day. Tryptophan is an essential amino acid, which aids in the production of Serotonin. Serotonin is a hormone, a neurotransmitter produced by the brain that affects moods, sleep, appetite, sexual drive, body temperature, endocrine functions, depression and even muscle contractions. The amino acid, tryptophan, found in many carbohydrates, aids in the brain's manufacturing process of serotonin. Serotonin as suggested by Carol Hart in **Secrets of Serotonin**, creates a sense of well being within. When our body is producing the proper amount of serotonin we feel at ease with life and the world around us. Serotonin enables us to sleep well and **counteracts** insomnia.

Serotonin lifts our moods and combats depression. Serotonin induces feelings of relaxation and combats anxiousness. Serotonin is essential for an emotionally fit body and mind. You can make your foods work for you. You can use your foods to control your serotonin levels...naturally.

**Tryptophan** prepares your body for the production of serotonin. When tryptophan and protein are in the bloodstream, all it takes is a carbohydrate, preferably a complex carbohydrate (whole grain muffin, bagel, toast, bread or pretzels) to release enough insulin, which carries the tryptophan into the brain to promote the production of serotonin. This is best accomplished 3-4 hours after ingesting a protein. This is especially helpful for the insomniac if ingested before bedtime. Dr. Kathleen DesMaisons, PhD, suggests in her book **Potatoes Not Prozac**, that the secret is to eat proteins, good fats and carbohydrates during the day and a complex carbohydrate **alone without a protein** before bedtime. Proteins only prohibit the work of the carbohydrate at this point. A handful of dry cereal, a bagel or a few pretzel rods or best of all (as Dr. DesMaisons suggests) a potato, will easily release all the serotonin necessary for a sense of calm and well being necessary for a good night's sleep. This certainly beats taking a sleeping pill, which chemically induces drowsiness but may also leave one feeling woozy in the morning. Plus, who needs the threat of chemicals when there is a simple, effective recipe for success. Carbohydrates are the serotonin producing foods, suggests Judith Wurtman, Ph, D, in **Managing Your Mind and Mood Through Food**. Natural is available, less costly and best of all...it works!

**Foods HIGH in Tryptophan** are as follows: **Dairy, beef, poultry (especially turkey), barley, brown rice, fish (especially tuna), soybeans, nuts (especially peanuts), seeds, bananas, shellfish, cheddar cheese and cottage cheese**, as suggested by Diana Schwarzbein, M.D. in **The Schwarzbein Principle II**.

**Carbohydrates:** Not all carbohydrates are created equal as suggested by Judith Wurtman, Ph.D. in her book **Managing the Mind & Mood Through Food**. "Carbohydrates will work, even when the user is skeptical," she states. There are simple carbohydrates, which quickly digest, and there are complex carbohydrates that fuel your body in a slow more methodical fashion, taking longer to digest. This is why complex carbohydrates are known as **Quality Carbohydrates** as suggested by David Edelberg, M.D. in **The Triple Whammy Cure**. The simple carbohydrates or simple sugars elicit a quick boost of energy and digest very quickly. Many with anxiety are reactive to this burst of energy and fare far better with the slower digestion of complex carbohydrates. If you do have a simple carbohydrate (fruit preferred) a protein is recommended along with it to buffer speedy rise of insulin in the bloodstream. Too high an initial boost of insulin energy might lift the person quickly but there is a price to pay. An individual sensitive to sugar might respond with an anxiety reaction and the drop



after the rise can leave them feeling anxious. This simple carbohydrate is digested very quickly and the rush of energy can be unnerving to someone dealing with anxiety. Examples of simple carbohydrates are candies, cakes, cookies, fruits, fruit juice, honey, molasses and sugar. Many with anxiety conditions find they feel better by avoiding simple sugars or by eating them sparingly with a protein as a buffer.

**Bedtime Snack: Complex Carbohydrate (alone, minus the protein).**

Complex Carbohydrate= Dry Cereal (handful or two of whole grain Cheerios), One or Two Pretzel Rods, Bagel, Toast, or English muffin. Even though we normally would not eat a potato as a snack before bedtime, it will work wonders to boost serotonin levels, as suggested by Kathleen DesMaisons in her book, **Potatoes Not Prozac**. Give it a try, and you will be astounded at the results. As far as cereals, muffins and bagels, aim for whole grain, as the rise in blood sugar will be slow and steady as suggested by David Edelberg, M.D. in **The Triple Whammy Cure**. Simple sugars work quickly but dissipate quickly as well...resulting in interrupted sleep patterns.

**Complex Carb=Quality Carb**

Remember to **omit** the protein before bed, or it will block the action of the carbohydrate. After ingesting the complex carbohydrate you will find yourself becoming drowsy. You will find yourself experiencing sounder, more relaxing sleep, and more often that not...**Sweet Dreams!**

**Avoid Skipping Meals or Excessive Dieting-** When we eat too little or skip meals, the body produces adrenaline and other stress hormones to compensate for lack of fuel (meaning food). A good example is the late afternoon slump when blood sugar drops and anxiety or irritability sets in. This is due to the production of these hormones when you've exhausted your energy levels and blood sugar levels plummet. These stress hormones kick in when you are knocking for fuel. The proper food prevents this from occurring. Eating properly can remedy this slump.

Dieting too strenuously also presents an added stress as suggested by Diana Schwarzbein, M.D. in **The Schwarzbein Principle II**. Eat well and eat nutritiously to avoid this problem. You can maintain a strong lean body when you eat well, without the strain of excessive dieting, which can deplete the body of precious serotonin and result in insomnia.

**Limit Alcohol Consumption-** Alcohol contributes to insomnia more than it aids this condition, because it interrupts sleep after it seemed so easy to doze off. Don't be fooled into believing this is a great sleep aid. Although you might easily fall asleep after drinking alcohol, more often than not, it will wake you during sleep. Blood sugar levels plummet, causing wakefulness.

**Check Your Medications-** Certain medications, especially the "non drowsy" formula varieties of antihistamines interfere with sleep patterns. Check out

your medicine cabinet before assuming you have a sleep problem. It may be the medication you are currently taking and not insomnia at all.

**Limit Caffeine in Your Diet-** Coffee, teas, colas and many other foods and beverages contain caffeine, which only stimulate your system. To ensure good sleep patterns it's important to slowly eliminate caffeine in your diet. Begin slowly by cutting back on these substances and experience a more restful night's sleep. Gradual elimination of caffeine from your diet is well worth the effort! You will feel better during the day and sleep better at night. If you need a wake-up in the AM, take a hot shower and a brisk walk. Exercise is the healthful way to shake out the cobwebs!

**Put Out the Cigarettes!-** For all the obvious reasons one should consider giving up cigarettes, but if you are seeking a good night's sleep, this might be strong enough motivation to break a bad habit. Nicotine is a stimulant and will only serve to maintain wakefulness as suggested by Diana Schwarzbein in **The Schwarzbein Principle II**. The only calming effect a cigarette produces is from the deep slow inhalation, pause and slow exhalation. You are able to achieve the *same* effect *without* drawing in the smoke of a cigarette. Save your money and your health as you learn to slowly breathe in and out on your own. Breathe in deeply through your nose, hold a few seconds and slowly exhale through your mouth, as if blowing out the cigarette smoke. Works a lot better, is less costly and always readily available. Concentrate on breathing deep down in your stomach for more restful breathing. We use belly breathing while we sleep because unconsciously the body shifts into the more relaxing, deeper breath.

**Vitamins-** Vitamin B and C complex strengthens the nervous system. Along with a good multiple vitamin/mineral formula, a sound diet/nutrition plan, and nutritious whole foods, this supplement aids in good sleep patterns. This Vitamin B and C complex is recommended after lunch, on a full stomach for best absorption. Avoid taking too close to bedtime, as vitamins may be too stimulating, inhibiting sleep. Calcium and Magnesium supplements are also recommended supplements for a good night's rest. Vitamin E is a good choice for maintaining healthy brain cells. Always check with your physician or pharmacist for dosages. Start lower rather than higher.

**Water-** The body must be hydrated in order to run properly. There is no other liquid you could possibly drink to rival pure water. Therefore, 6-8 glasses of water a day is generally recommended. Summer heat or strenuous exercising requires extra water. The body eliminates toxins through urination and cools down efficiently through proper hydration. We need water to maintain a well running body. Symptoms of dehydration can increase anxiety. If you have difficulty with wakefulness during the night due to bathroom breaks, you might want to reserve your water drinking for earlier in the day or evening.

**Herbal Teas-** Certain herbal teas work very well for inducing a calm state of mind, especially at bedtime. Chamomile, in particular, is very soothing and helps one wind down into a relaxed state before bed. Sleepytime Tea also contains chamomile and is a delicious soothing relaxer. A steamy cup in the evening will help lull you to sleep. Kava kava is said to calm many into a relaxed state, as well. Remember, always check with your physician or pharmacist before taking herbals if you are taking any medications. Many herbals interact with medications (especially SSRI's) and therefore it is best to investigate before taking any herbal remedy.

**Aromatherapy-** You might want to experiment with aromatherapy as a source of calm relaxation therapy before sleep. Certain fragrances elicit a tranquil sense of well being, especially at bedtime. Essential oils may help neutralize stresses you might have accumulated during the day. Chamomile, lavender and valerian oils are all recommended as part of aromatherapy.

**Exercise:** Moderate exercise is one of the strongest defenses against insomnia. Wake up early and go outdoors for a walk. Burn off excess adrenaline and feel a calm yet invigorated feeling after exercise. Being outdoors is an extra plus. The oxygen breaks up the cobwebs and enables you feel refreshed. Guaranteed you will feel better, eat better and sleep better after beginning a regimen of moderate walking. Check with your physician and enjoy being outdoors.

**Light:** Exposure to sunlight helps set Circadian rhythms. These cycles enable the body to eat, sleep and function at proper times. Light helps regulate these specific body functions and enables you to find your way back into the groove of good sleeping habits. This is why outdoor activity is a good natural remedy for broken sleep cycle patterns. Sunlight has a way of straightening this problem out. Even cloudy days are brighter than indoor lighting. You can also obtain a light box for full spectrum lighting. Many with Seasonal Affective Disorder purchase these lights during the winter months.

**Warm Bath:** A warm bath is soothing and relaxing, plus it causes body temperature to rise and slowly fall as you get into bed. If you bathe fifteen minutes before bed, your body temperature will slowly drop as you become comfortable under the covers. This slow drop induces sleepiness and is perfect for falling asleep.

**Cool Room/Light Bedclothes:** A cool room (window cracked a little) will offer a comfortable environment for sleeping. An overheated room produces an overheated body, and wakefulness during the night. Cooler is better and enjoy a refreshing sleep.

**Shades:** If sunlight wakes you in the morning, you might want to invest in room darkening shades. They come in beautiful colors and block out early morning sunlight, which you may find, interferes with your sleep.

## **SUGGESTED 7 DAY MEAL PLAN PRESCRIPTION FOR INSOMNIA**

### **Day 1**

**Breakfast:** Juice glass of fresh orange juice or fresh orange slices.  
2 eggs with 2 slices turkey bacon *or* turkey sausage  
1 slice rye toast, butter optional  
1 cup of unsweetened herbal tea or decaffeinated tea or coffee.

**Snack:** Natural peanut butter on whole grain crackers,  
Cup of decaf green tea

**Lunch:** Cup of mushroom barley soup  
Tuna salad on whole grain roll with lettuce and tomato  
Glass of unsweetened iced herbal tea

**Snack:** ½ Cup of Sunflower Seeds and Sliced Apples

**Dinner:** Grilled Chicken Cutlet, broccoli and mushrooms, brown rice.  
Green Salad with oil (extra virgin olive oil) and vinegar or lemon juice  
Whole grain roll  
Strawberries and light cream  
Cup of unsweetened tea or coffee

**Bedtime:** 2-3 handfuls of dry Cheerios oat cereal *or* 2 Pretzel Rods, warm Oatmeal minus the milk, a small potato (as suggested in DesMaisons **Potatoes Not Prozac** book.), toast *or* ½ small bagel.

\*Fruits are neutral and will not raise serotonin levels.

### **Day 2**

**Breakfast:** 1 Slice of cantaloupe/ cottage cheese optional  
Whole grain waffle with turkey sausage  
1 cup of unsweetened herbal tea or decaffeinated tea or coffee.

- Snack:** 2 teaspoons *Natural* peanut butter on whole grain crackers
- Lunch:** Turkey on rye with mustard  
Tomato salad with vinegar and oil  
Glass of unsweetened iced herbal tea or flavored club soda.
- Snack:** Salmon Salad on whole grain crackers
- Dinner:** Roasted Turkey, fresh steamed string beans, baked yam  
Caesar salad with grated Parmesan  
Cup of low glycemic fruit: Cantaloupe, strawberries, and blueberries  
With low fat sour cream or cottage cheese  
Cup of unsweetened tea or coffee
- Bedtime:** 2-3 handfuls of dry Cheerios oat cereal *or* 2 Pretzel Rods  
*or* toast *or* ½ small bagel. Fruits are neutral and will not raise serotonin levels.

### **Day 3**

- Breakfast:** ½ Grapefruit  
Turkey Bacon Omelet  
1 Slice of Pumpnickel toast  
1 cup of unsweetened herbal tea or decaffeinated tea or coffee
- Snack:** ½ Cup of Sunflower seeds and ½ cup of sliced strawberries
- Lunch:** Caesar salad with grilled chicken  
Toasted whole grain roll  
Glass of unsweetened iced herbal tea
- Snack:** Sliced avocado on sourdough crackers
- Dinner:** Grilled salmon, asparagus and baked potato (light sour cream)  
Green salad with lemon *or* vinegar and oil  
Fruit Slices with Brie  
Cup of unsweetened tea or coffee
- Bedtime:** 2-3 handfuls of dry Cheerios oat cereal *or* bowl of warm oatmeal,  
toast *or* ½ small bagel. Fruits are neutral and will not raise serotonin levels.

**Day 4**

- Breakfast:** Orange slices  
Oatmeal with butter and milk  
Turkey Sausage  
1 cup of unsweetened herbal tea or decaffeinated tea or coffee
- Snack:** Sliced melon and Brie on Whole Grain Crackers
- Lunch:** Egg salad sandwich on rye with tomato and lettuce  
Sliced avocado with lemon juice  
Glass of unsweetened iced herbal tea or club soda
- Snack:** Celery and yogurt spinach dip
- Dinner:** Hearty vegetable soup  
Roasted Chicken with brown rice and grilled vegetables  
Tomato Salad with Balsamic Vinegar and Olive Oil  
Cup of unsweetened tea or coffee
- Bedtime:** 2-3 handfuls of dry Cheerios oat cereal *or* 2 Pretzel Rods, toast *or* ½ small bagel. Fruits are neutral and will not raise serotonin levels.

**Day 5**

- Breakfast:** Fruit salad (grapefruit, blueberries, strawberries and cantaloupe)  
Topped with Dollop of Low Fat Sour Cream or Cottage Cheese  
1 cup of unsweetened herbal tea or decaffeinated tea or coffee
- Snack:** Celery stuffed with Low Fat Sour Cream Spinach Dip
- Lunch:** Turkey Burger on Whole Grain Roll  
Mixed Green Salad with vinegar and olive oil  
Glass of unsweetened iced herbal tea
- Snack:** Hummus and whole grain pita triangles
- Dinner:** Chicken Cutlet (*unbreaded*) with whole grain pasta and broccoli rabe  
Caesar Salad (no croutons)  
Cup of unsweetened tea or coffee

**Bedtime:** 2-3 handfuls of dry Cheerios oat cereal, warm oatmeal minus milk, toast *or* ½ small bagel. Fruits are neutral and will not raise serotonin levels.

### *Day 6*

**Breakfast:** Hard-boiled egg sandwich on Rye toast, a teaspoon of mayonnaise  
1 cup of unsweetened herbal tea or decaffeinated tea or coffee

**Snack:** ½ Cup of pumpkin seeds and sliced apple

**Lunch:** Grilled Salmon or Chicken Caesar Salad  
Chewy Whole Grain Bread lightly buttered  
Glass of unsweetened iced herbal tea

**Snack:** Natural Peanut Butter crackers (whole grain)

**Dinner:** Minestrone Soup  
Grilled Shrimp Scampi with sautéed spinach (in olive oil and garlic)  
and  
long grain rice  
Baked Apple with light cream  
Cup of unsweetened tea or coffee or flavored club soda

**Bedtime:** 2-3 handfuls of dry Cheerios or a bowl of warm oatmeal minus the milk  
Fruits are neutral and will not raise serotonin levels.

### *Day 7*

**Breakfast:** Poached eggs on buttered rye toast with turkey sausage  
1 cup of unsweetened herbal tea or decaffeinated tea or coffee

**Snack:** Chicken slices and Mandarin Oranges

**Lunch:** Shrimp and Crabmeat over Romaine lettuce with lemon Vinaigrette dressing  
Glass of unsweetened herbal tea, flavored club soda or  
unsweetened  
decaffeinated coffee

**Snack:** ¼ cup of almonds/or sliced cheddar and deviled egg

**Dinner:** Chicken soup  
 Grilled Salmon, couscous, sautéed spinach  
 Side salad with oil and vinegar  
 Cup of unsweetened tea or coffee

**Bedtime:** 2-3 handfuls of dry Cheerios oat cereal *or* one small whole grain Bagel.  
 Fruits are neutral and will not raise serotonin levels.

### Reminders:

--- A protein with every meal and snack will keep blood sugar levels balanced.

--- Avoid all simple sugars (candy, cookies, gelatins, sodas, syrups, and sweets) except fruits. Eat protein along with fruits that are very sweet (high on the glycemic index). Fruits with lower positions on the glycemic index are: Blueberries, strawberries, peaches, plums, raspberries and apricots. Dry fruits are high on the glycemic scale, and consumed on a less frequent basis at this time.

--- Aim for all foods lower on the Glycemic Index. Eat less foods that rank high on the glycemic charts. The more sugary the taste, the higher their status on the glycemic index.

---Be aware of **hidden** sugars such as: Condiments (ketchup, sweet pickles, relish, canned soups, and barbeque sauces).

--- Avoid all refined and processed foods. Examples include: Instant potatoes, instant rice, white bread, instant or highly refined cereals, and chips.)

---Strive for 5 small meals a day rather than 3 larger meals. This will maintain balanced blood sugar levels and calmer reactions.

---Caffeine in food is just **not worth it!** In test after test, it has been proven to stimulate the nervous system and hamper one's recovery from the anxiety condition. This is one substance that is worth avoiding, at all costs.

---Fresh air and exercise foster a sense of well being, good appetite and a restful night's sleep.

---Do not obsess if you do not sleep well one night. Pressure about sleeping only adds to insomnia. Trust your body and it will never let you down. Sleep eventually will come, if you learn to move out of your own way.



Feel secure in the knowledge that insomnia is a temporary break in your normal sleep patterns. Naturally, as in anything else, the more upset you become over this, the longer it seems to linger. Altering eating habits, enforcing good strong coping techniques and using prevention skills will enable you to sleep well and live a healthy life. Sleep is important for our own sense of well-being. Do the most for yourself...eat well, exercise, and nurture yourself, ensuring a good night's rest, every night.

## **HELPFUL HINTS *BEYOND* NUTRITION PRESCRIPTION**

**-Aromatherapy-** You might want to experiment with aromatherapy as a source of peace and calm before sleep. Certain fragrances elicit a tranquil sense of well being, especially at bedtime. Essential oils can help to neutralize the stress, built up during the day. Chamomile, lavender and valerian oils are all recommended as a remedy for insomnia.

**-Cool Room, Light Bed Clothes-** Remain comfortable during the night by not overdressing or overheating your room. Crack the window if possible and allow yourself to breathe fresh air.

**-Low Lighting-** Low lighting an hour or so before sleep ensures the production of the natural hormone called **melatonin**, which regulates our sleep and wake cycles. The darker the room the more melatonin is produced. Body temperature falls as we begin to feel sleep. If you were to sit in a room with low lighting you would begin to feel sleepy...faster than a well-lit room. As light enters the room at dawn, melatonin levels drop dramatically. Therefore, if you must go to the bathroom or rise from bed during the night, maintain low lighting, in order to return to sleep. Refrain from snapping on bright lights that only halt the natural production of melatonin.

**-Permission-** If you enter a difficult cycle of insomnia, give yourself permission *not* to sleep. The pressure of "trying" to sleep only serves to push it further out of reach. Remove the pressure, and notice how quickly sleep sneaks up on you.

Try following our special Insomnia Day Plan, as listed below, and notice how your sleep habits improve as life in general becomes easier.

## Insomnia Day Plan Prescription

### **8:00AM:**

Start your day with a shower, stretching exercises, glass of juice or piece of fruit and light protein, and immediately put on the walking shoes. It's time to take it outdoors, drink in the oxygen and move. It's time to begin to set your circadian rhythms. No, we're not speaking about a new dance craze, your circadian "around the day" rhythm is basically your internal clock, that determines your sleep and wake cycles. The circadian rhythm determines how sleepy you will feel at night and when you will awake in the morning. It's time to take charge of your own sleep patterns. Do not allow a poor night's sleep interfere with your day. Go slowly if you must, but go forward. Circulation increases metabolism as you move. Energy increases as the morning wears on.

Exposure to light is essential for resetting your internal clock. Early morning sunlight, at a ½ hour minimum, is a great remedy for resetting this clock and restoring normalcy to your sleep rhythms. It also works great for jet lag. Remember...even if it is cloudy outdoors, it is still brighter than indoor activity. It's time to move off excess energy and soak in the sunlight.

### **10:00 AM**

Time for a mid-morning snack, geared towards fueling the body with protein, which will set the stage for serotonin building. A snack of either seeds, nuts or a combination of fruit and natural peanut butter might be one of your choices. Celery or veggies with low fat cheese might also be your preference.

Fill the rest of your morning with interests, occupation and productive ventures. Remain in bright light, hydrate yourself by sipping pure water and concentrate on positive experiences and thoughts. No morning napping. Reserve your sleep time for the bedroom only and at night. You are aiming to reset your sleep cycles.

### **12:00 Noon**

Lunch in a brightly lit kitchen or outdoors if weather permitting. You might even want to picnic in the park, lunch at an outdoor café or find a bench in the sunlight, if the chance presents itself. If in a restaurant, find a table near the window. Light exposure is essential for resetting sleep rhythms. Always choose a well-lighted venue when possible. Choose a protein a whole grain carbohydrate for your lunch, with a green salad if possible. No more overdosing on high carbohydrate lunches. They will leave you feeling groggy, lethargic and hamper concentration.

You are not seeking an afternoon nap, which could interfere with your night's sleep. Stick with proteins, vegetables and smaller portions of whole grain carbohydrates. This will ensure energy, and prepare the body for serotonin production at bedtime.

You might want a short stroll before returning to your afternoon work. Outdoors again and into the light. You might be surprised at the energy this produces. You may also be surprised as your mood improves. Sunlight has an uncanny way of lifting the spirits.

#### **4:00 PM**

Afternoon break with another snack. Select proteins and whole grain carbs, or veggies with a protein might be your choice. Find what suits your taste and enjoy your afternoon snack. This is the time of day when snacking is particularly important. Between 3:00 PM and 6:00 PM many people experience feelings of low blood sugar. This is due to working, thinking, interacting, and all the other energy sapping stresses that fill our afternoons. Worry too, will drain your energy and a snack will help normalize your blood sugar levels. Allow yourself this opportunity to recharge during this time of day. The difference is undeniable as your body begins to feel more energized and less vulnerable to low blood sugar reactions.

Stress and tension only lower serotonin levels in the brain, and lower serotonin levels lead to insomnia for many. Therefore, you will want to relax away as much stress as possible and eat carbohydrates (toast, dry cereal, pretzels, whole grain muffins) 3-4 hours after a protein (meat, fish, poultry, eggs or milk), especially at bedtime to increase serotonin levels. Remember, do not eat a protein with your carbohydrate at bedtime. It will block the action of the carbohydrate.

You might want to use this time write in your journal, walk in the park, do yoga stretches, ride your bicycle or read a book. Again, save the sleeping for bedtime.

#### **6:00 PM**

Dinnertime is more than just a meal. It's a time to reflect, share conversation, or catch up on the day's events. Whether you dine with your family, or alone, this is the time to take it easy, enjoy a delicious meal and begin to unwind as the evening approaches. Slowing down allows the body to prepare for a relaxed evening and eventually a good night's rest. It all begins with a relaxing meal, and

continues on as we use foods and lifestyle changes to ensure a calm and relaxed night.

### 9:00 PM

Lowered lighting for production of melatonin, restful thoughts, comfortable clothing and nurturing all set the stage for an evening of peace and calm. Make an effort to slow down during this time of evening. Take your time, speak slower, do your chores slower and bring your pace down to a slower more relaxed tempo. It's incredible how your body will conform to your speech patterns, movements and thoughts. Allow yourself this special time of day, to pamper yourself and enjoy the calm of a less frenetic evening. This does not mean you cannot laugh, watch your favorite television shows or enjoy good conversation or music. This simply means that it would be advantageous to your sleep cycle to wind down from the stresses of the day. Your choices are individualized to your form of relaxation. This does not mean you must remain sedate. De-stress and unwind the style that works best for you. Remember, before taking herbal teas or herbal formulas it is recommended you check with your physician or pharmacist if you are taking any medications. Some herbals interact with specific medications and are not recommended.

### 11:00 PM

A warm bath might be just the remedy for lifting stress and readying for bed. Not too hot, just warm and relaxing, for significant tension relief. You might consider using aromatherapy, scented candles or soft music during this time. As the body cools down after a warm bath, you will find yourself becoming sleepy.

A carbohydrate at this hour will ensure drowsiness and a good night's rest. A handful of dry cereal, a few pretzel rods, a bagel, half a baked potato (as suggested in *Potatoes Not Prozac* by Kathleen DesMaisons, PhD), or warm bowl of oatmeal will pave the way for a good night's sleep. Remember, this is the time to **avoid** protein. The protein you ate all day will ensure the carbohydrate you are now eating aids in serotonin production. Sleep will come easier and you might even have sweeter dreams.

Leave your worries behind and focus on all the positives of your life. Use paradoxical intention, meaning do the opposite pertaining to sleep. Instead of "trying" to fall asleep, give yourself permission to stay awake and watch sleep sneak up on you. When you chase sleep, it only serves to push it further from your grasp. Allow yourself to remain awake and without the pressure and worry, sleep will arrive in a speedier fashion.

Your body only builds up tolerance to sleeping pills. Why risk dependence, withdrawal symptoms and possible addiction. Learning strong alternatives and using foods to work for you, will give you control over your sleep cycles, your sense of health and well-being and most of all your life.

## Attitude

One generally feels refreshed and ready to face the day after a good night's rest. The body actually begins the slow path to awakening before sunrise, when cortisol production begins.

If we choose to become more active on a daily basis through aerobic activity, outdoor recreation, and taking in sunlight, we will reap the rewards of a drowsy body and mind at bedtime, which encourages a good night's sleep. All outdoor activity is greater than indoor movement since even the bleakest daytime weather is brighter than indoor lighting. This boosts serotonin levels and increases your sense of well being.

The mind/body connection is a strong one. It is based on the idea that our body responds to our thoughts. If we fear insomnia, it will grow in intensity. If we tame our thoughts, we will have given up the fight. ***What we resist, persists.***

Insomnia is based and fueled by our fears, just like anything else we fear. What we fear most is largest in our lives. Once you relinquish the fear, you have won.

Remember the times you had to remain awake, to catch that special television show or wait up for someone's return. Those were the times you were just about able to avoid falling off to sleep. Those were the times you were dozing off without knowing it. The logical reason was because of one thing... the **pressure was off**. The tension removed and the stress to sleep melted away. You were able to relax and nearly drift into sleep.

Sometimes it's difficult to let go of the day, but this is not impossible. There are ways to turn the mind off and to let go of thoughts. It takes a little practice but once achieved, it is greater than the strongest sleeping pill. Once you have learned how to accomplish this, it is always at your fingertips. Our meditation cd/tape will provide you with everything you need to know in order to slow down the mind, and relax yourself into restful sleep.

## Breathing

Breathing may seem like a simple function but you'd be surprised at how many individuals are breathing in a very shallow fashion, using only their upper chest. When you awaken in the morning, before you leap out of bed, before your

thoughts take over, before you grab for the telephone...take a look at how you are breathing. You are breathing deep down into your stomach. This is how we breathe when asleep. We take in air through our nose, and our stomach rises as we do so. We hold it for a few seconds and then slowly exhale through our mouth. We may not be conscious of it but this breathing technique is the most relaxing form of breathing we possess. This long, slow, deep breath is the way we breathe all through sleep. When we awaken and charge through our day, the breathing often shifts to upper chest, shallow, short intake of air. This is not fueling the mind or body as this other restful form of breathing. When you lie in bed at night, practice this slow, smooth form of breathing. It will slow down your body functions, your mind and produce the calmest most receptive body, which will slip into a restful sleep. Practice brushing away intrusive thoughts if they seep into your consciousness...and continue to breathe, smoothly and calmly.

Everyone has a choice. You have a choice. Sleep is not as elusive as you may now believe. Follow the instructions in this eBook, listen to our Insomnia CD/Tape, and follow the diet/nutrition plan we have included in this book as well. Listen to our Meditation CD/Tape during the day to detach from stress or to wind down from a racing mind/body, before going to sleep at night. It will set the stage for a restful night's sleep, a sound sleep, a healthy sleep, and a healthier day tomorrow.

**\* For further information about foods and moods, Tryptophan, Melatonin and Raising Serotonin levels through nutrition, check out the following books:**

**Potatoes Not Prozac**, by Kathleen DesMaisons Ph.D

**Secrets of Serotonin** by Carol Hart

**Managing Your Mind & Mood Through Food** by Judith Wurtman, Ph.D.

**The Triple Whammy Cure** by David Edelberg, M.D.

**The Schwarzbein Principle II**, by Diana Schwarzbein, M.D.