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THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER SURVEYS SOME POPULAR, COMPLEMENTARY SLEEP REMEDIES.

CBT-I (COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY FOR INSOMNIA) treats insomnia without using sleeping pills. CBT-I is aimed at changing sleep habits and schedules. It includes regular, often weekly, visits with a sleep expert.

YOGA may be helpful for sleep problems. It helps calm the mind and lower stress. Certain poses may be particularly helpful, especially when they are practiced in the evening. Viparita karani or the legs up against the wall pose is a favorite.

TAI CHI is a low-impact, aerobic exercise that originated in ancient China. Tai chi involves slow movements, deep breathing and meditation. Oregon researchers found that two of every three tai chi practitioners had improved sleep quality.

CHAMOMILE Although chamomile tea has long been used for insomnia, there is no conclusive evidence showing whether it is helpful. Some people, especially those who are allergic to ragweed, may have allergic reactions to chamomile.

MELATONIN is a natural hormone that plays a role in sleep. Melatonin production and release in the brain is related to time of day. Melatonin levels rise in the evening and fall in the morning. Light at night blocks its production. Melatonin supplements have been studied for sleep disorders, such as jet lag and problems with sleep among people who work night shifts. Melatonin supplements may slightly reduce the time it takes to fall asleep. Melatonin appears to be safe when used for a short period of time. Less is known about its long-term safety.

VALERIAN has been used as a medicinal herb since the time of ancient Greece. Today, valerian is sold as a remedy for sleep disorders, anxiety and headaches. Research suggests that valerian may be helpful for insomnia, but there is not enough proof to confirm this. Valerian is generally safe to use for short periods of time.

QUICKTAKES



SLEEPING WELL

- How much sleep we need varies from person to person. The National Institutes of Health suggests that school-age children get at least 10 hours of sleep daily. Teens need 9 to 10 hours. Adults need 7 to 8 hours.
- Nearly 30% of adults get less than 6 hours of sleep at night.
- Poor sleep is linked to high rates of accidents on the road and the workplace.
- Poor sleep is also linked to high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke and depression.
- Lack of sleep can reduce the body's responsiveness to the flu vaccine.
- Because trouble sleeping can be a sign of a more serious condition, it is important to discuss sleep problems with your healthcare provider.

EAT FOR SLEEP

Some foods may help with sleep problems:

- It's really true. A warm glass of milk can help you fall asleep. Dairy foods contain tryptophan, which is a sleep-promoting substance. Other foods that are high in tryptophan include nuts, seeds, bananas and eggs.
- Carbohydrate-rich foods complement dairy foods by increasing the level of sleep-inducing tryptophan in the blood. So a few perfect late-night snacks might include a bowl of cereal and milk, yogurt and crackers, or bread and cheese. But do keep your snack small. A heavy meal will tax your digestive system and make you uncomfortable.
- What do fish, chickpeas, kale, fortified cereals and bananas have in common? They all boost vitamin B6, which is needed to make sleep-inducing melatonin.
- Tart cherry juice is rich in melatonin. When adults with chronic insomnia drank a cup of tart cherry juice twice a day they experienced some relief from their insomnia.

Sources: <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/sleep/ataglance.htm> <http://sleepfoundation.org/insomnia/home>

CHICKPEA SOUP, PORTUGUESE-STYLE

SERVES 6

Chickpeas and kale both boost vitamin B6, which in turn is needed to make melatonin, the hormone that may improve sleep. At the very least, this is a satisfying, warming soup for a chilly night.

INGREDIENTS

1 tablespoon olive oil
2 onions, chopped
3 cloves garlic, chopped
2 cups peeled and coarsely chopped potatoes
1 teaspoon dried marjoram or oregano
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
1 bay leaf
1 15-ounce can low-sodium chickpeas, divided
4 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
8 ounces smoked turkey sausage, cut in half lengthwise and sliced
6 ounces baby kale or spinach leaves
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Parsley or cilantro leaves, for garnish (optional)

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat olive oil in a large saucepan over medium-low heat. Add onions and garlic, and cook, stirring often, until light brown and soft, about 10 minutes.
2. Add potatoes and herbs to the saucepan. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in the broth and about half of the chickpeas and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove the pan from heat and let cool slightly.
3. Remove the bay leaf. In the food processor or blender, process the soup until smooth, working in batches.
4. Return the soup to the saucepan and bring to a simmer. Stir sausage, spinach, pepper and the remaining chickpeas into the soup. Cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir often to prevent the soup from sticking to the bottom of the pan.
5. Ladle the soup into bowls. Garnish with parsley or cilantro, if desired.



NUTRITIONAL INFO

240 Calories
6g Fat
2g Saturated fat
14g Protein
35g Carbohydrate
7g Fiber
306mg Sodium