

November Newsletter



THE BEST SLEEP POSITIONS

How You Can Strike a Positive Pose in Bed

As soon as we are able to curl up in bed by ourselves, we fix on a preferred sleep posture; crawling into bed and assuming the same position every night without much thought. Our sleep environment often becomes the object of our aches and pains; the bed is too firm or the pillow is too soft. But it is possible that your sleep posture is to blame. Misalignment during sleep can put stress and strain on the spine, neck, shoulder, hips and jaw which in turn affects how you feel the next day. It can also sabotage your ability to relax well enough to fall asleep. Watch a sleeping child and they are likely to be a stomach sleeper, while grandma fancies the right-sided position. Still, adjusting your sleep position may mean the difference between night and day.

There are 3 curves on the body that you should be paying attention to; 1 in the lower back, 1 in middle of your back, and 1 near the neck. The goal is to try to maintain these natural curves when you sleep. Here is some healthy advice for your manner of sleeping.

DEAD MAN'S FLOAT

This sleeper spends the night prone, on his stomach, head turned to the side, with arms splayed under the pillow.

The problem - In this position you hyper-flex the neck and exert pressure on the nerves along the underside of your arms that can cause pins and needles and awaken you from sleep. The body's weight compresses the lungs, preventing a fully expanded deep breath. It also exerts unnecessary pressure on the breasts.

The fix - Don't use a head pillow at all. Try raising the whole side of your body slightly with a long pillow, or place a pillow under your hips.

THE SOLDIER

This sleeper spends the night on his back.

The problem - Sleeping in the supine position can cause the tongue to fall inwards to block the breathing tube. Back sleepers are prone to snoring and sleeping supine is not good for people with sleep apnea, a life-threatening sleep disorder that causes brief episodes of breathlessness.

The fix - Sleeping on your back is not good for you or your bed partner, who may have to endure every snort and rattle all night. Infants however, should always be placed on their backs to prevent sudden infant death (SIDS). If you must sleep on your back, put a pillow under your knees and a small pillow under your lower back.

People with heart failure, certain respiratory diseases, glaucoma or gastro-esophageal reflux disease (GERD) may benefit from taking their soldier position into a semi-sitting position.

SLEEPING BEAUTY

This type of sleeper sleeps on the side, back slightly curled with knees bent and arms folded.

The problem - None. This is the healthiest position to sleep in. This posture complements the natural curvature of the spine.

To make it even better - Add comfort and reduce stress on the hips by putting a pillow between your knees. Use a pillow of moderate height to support the head.

Try a water pillow that can be easily adjusted.

If there is room, stretch arms out front. If you have high blood pressure, try sleeping on the left side. If you are prone to kidney stones on one side, side-sleep on the other side.

Source: <http://www.doctoroz.com/videos/best-sleep-positions>

5 best foods to help you sleep and 2 you should avoid

Integrative Health in Toronto, for their suggestions of foods that help you fall asleep quickly and for longer periods of time.

1. **Walnuts** - If you're having trouble falling asleep, eat a handful of walnuts. They contain melatonin, a hormone produced by the brain and gastrointestinal tract that "is involved in regulating sleep-wake cycles," says Love.

2. **Cherries** - Some foods promote melatonin synthesis in the body and cherries are one of them, says Flower. Like walnuts, cherries contain a healthy dose of melatonin, a hormone that helps lull you to sleep.

3. **Turkey** - Now, we don't suggest you scarf down all of the turkey in your fridge, but there is a reason why you feel like having a nap after your Thanksgiving feast. Turkey contains L-tryptophan, a nutrient that "has been shown to increase sleepiness and decrease the time it takes to fall asleep," says Love. "This nutrient is a precursor for melatonin and serotonin synthesis."

4. **Whole grains** - Stress is one of the main contributors to sleep disruption. "With long-term stress, the adrenal glands [which modulate our stress response] become overtaxed. B vitamins are essential for the healthy functioning of these glands and for supporting healthy sleep cycles," says Love. B vitamins, such as B6 and B12, are cofactors in producing melatonin. Some great sources of these B vitamins include bananas, lentils, fish and whole grains. However, if you're taking B vitamins as supplements, be sure to take them in the morning as they can disrupt your sleep if taken too close to bedtime.

5. **Leafy greens and vegetables** - Many people are deficient in the mineral magnesium, likely because it gets depleted with stress. "Even a mild magnesium deficiency may cause anxiety, depression, irritability and insomnia," says Flower. To relax and sleep better, be sure to include magnesium-rich foods in your diet. Nuts, whole grains, dairy products, leafy greens and vegetables are all great sources of magnesium. To get as much magnesium as possible, cook your vegetables by lightly steaming them, as 50 to 70 per cent of magnesium is lost when vegetables are boiled.

Foods to avoid: Coffee - It's no surprise that caffeine, a stimulant, is a no-no if you're trying to get a good night's sleep. Love recommends avoiding coffee, cola, chocolate and black tea before bedtime, as they all contain caffeine and will impair your sleep.

Foods to avoid: Cookies and cake - "Blood sugar levels can contribute to sleep concerns when sleep cycles are disrupted by either too high or too low blood sugar," says Flower. Therefore, if you're craving a snack before bed, make sure to incorporate a good source of protein, such as a handful of nuts or some Greek yogurt, and to avoid simple sugars like those found in cookies and cake.

http://www.canadianliving.com/health/sleep/5_best_foods_to_help_you_sleep_and_2_you_should_avoid-1.php#top_nav_slide

November 11th



Lest We Forget



LET NATURE BE YOUR GUIDE

This is always a good rule to follow, especially when choosing what to eat. Whatever food is in season is pretty much what your body needs. Think of all the

amazing root veggies that are so bountiful this time of year: they're warming and grounding for our systems. Apples and pears provide natural sweetness that sooth our minds, and our real draw to all that is Pumpkin Spice—which is really just a blend of nutmeg, cardamom, and cinnamon—is because those spices help stoke the internal fire as the weather cools. So here are a couple swaps to make that support your system during the changing seasons.

TORTILLAS FOR SPROUTED WHEAT - Does anyone else go taco-crazy during the summer? In the summer, this makes perfect sense! Corn is light and easy to digest, which is great for warm weather, but try swapping corn tortillas for sprouted wheat, like Ezekiel Bread. Sprouted wheat lubricates joints in dry, cool fall, and keeps your energy up.

RAW SALADS FOR COOKED SALADS OR STEWS - Hot weather means our digestive fire is roaring: we have the capacity to power through raw veggies and assimilate their nutrients with ease. As the weather cools, so does that fire. We need food cooked—essentially partially digested—to get extract those same nutrients that our bodies can use to keep us warm.

COCONUT OIL FOR OLIVE OR SESAME OIL - Coconut oil has inherent cooling properties. In fact, in Ayurveda coconut oil is the go-to oil for fiery Pitta to chill them out. For external use, try using sweet almond oil as a moisturizer and massage oil; this is great for keeping skin healthy and supple when cool weather tends to dry us out. For cooking, try raw sesame oil or olive oil; both have warming properties.

YOGURT FOR OATMEAL - Yogurt with berries is such an easy breakfast, isn't it? It's also so summery! But the berries that were so plentiful (and cheap!) at the market are now dwindling. We love yogurt in the summer because it has a cooling effect on the body. Cooked cereal, on the other hand, is fantastic for fall because of it's warming and grounding qualities. Oatmeal especially keeps you full with fiber. Mix in pumpkin puree and cinnamon for an extra cozy breakfast—it seriously tastes like pie.

This isn't so much a substitution, but just...

ADD GINGER - To everything. Oatmeal, sautés and stir-fry's, soups and stews...ginger is just so versatile! Savory or sweet, fresh ginger stokes the digestive fire, helps your body assimilate nutrients in your food, helps remove toxins, improves circulation and a billion other things. Just eat it, a lot of it. Other nourishing spices included cardamom, cinnamon, sage, basil, mustard seed, tarragon, sage, thyme, cloves and so much more. Switch it up and experiment to keep interested in what you're nourishing your body with.

<http://raquelalexandra.com/2013/10/08/transitioning-to-fall-fall-food-swaps/>



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Boost your immune system for winter

- Increase your zinc intake, it is crucial for the development and function of the body's infection-fighting white blood cells.
- Zinc coupled with Vitamin C and antioxidants help protect the body's cells against damage and infection.
- Increase your fluid intake. Dehydration will make cold and flu symptoms worse. Try green tea or warm water with a wedge of lemon for a soothing, warm change.
- Try these foods for optimal winter health:
 - Broccoli** - exceptionally high in antioxidants.
 - Carrots** - full of the antioxidant beta carotene.
 - Red capsicum** - massive hit of vitamin C.
 - Kiwifruit** - just one contains your entire daily requirement of vitamin C.
 - Oranges** - just one contains your entire daily requirement of vitamin C.
 - Green tea** - powerful antioxidant.
 - Mushrooms** - rich source of antioxidants.
 - Lean beef** - rich in zinc.
 - Oysters** - exceptionally high in zinc and iodine.
 - Berries** - packed with antioxidants but few kilojoules.

<http://www.bodyandsoul.com.au/nutrition/nutrition+tips/boost+your+immune+system+for+winter,9181>

Hearty Chicken Stew with Butternut Squash & Quinoa Recipe

Ingredients

- * 1 1/2 lb. butternut squash, peeled, seeded & chopped into 1/2-inch pieces
- * 3 1/2 cups chicken broth
- * 1 1/2 lb. boneless, skinless chicken thighs
- * 1 tbsp olive oil
- * 1 medium yellow onion, finely chopped
- * 1/2 tsp kosher salt
- * 4 cloves garlic, minced
- * 1 1/2 tsp dried oregano
- * 1 can (14 oz) petite diced tomatoes
- * 2/3 cup uncooked quinoa
- * 3/4 cup pitted & quartered kalamata olives
- * Freshly ground black pepper
- * 1/4 cup minced fresh flat-leaf parsley

Instructions

* Steam the butternut squash until barely tender, about 10 minutes. Remove half of the squash pieces and set aside. * Steam the remaining squash until very tender, an additional 4 to 6 minutes. * Mash this squash with the back of a fork. Set aside. * In a large saucepan set over medium-high heat, bring the chicken broth to a simmer. * Add chicken thighs, cover, cook until chicken is cooked through, about 15 minutes. * Transfer the chicken thighs to a plate and allow to cool. * Pour broth into a medium-sized bowl. * Return the saucepan to the stovetop and lower heat to medium. Add olive oil. * Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, until onion is starting to turn brown, 8 to 10 minutes. * Add the salt, minced garlic and oregano. Cook, stirring, for 1 additional minute. * To the saucepan, add tomatoes, butternut squash pieces, mashed butternut squash. Stir to combine. Stir in reserved chicken broth and quinoa. * Bring to a simmer, cover and cook until the quinoa turns translucent, about 15 minutes. * Shred the chicken with your fingers or a fork. Stir the chicken, olives and pepper into the stew and simmer, uncovered, to heat, about 5 minutes. * Stir in parsley and serve.

Notes: Calories 329 / Total Fat 14.1g / Saturated Fat 1.0 / Cholesterol 15.2mg / Sodium 1209mg / Total Carbohydrates 32.8g / Fiber 5.4g / Sugars 3.0g / Protein 19.4g / WW (Old Points) 7 / WW (Points+) 9
<http://www.cookincanuck.com/2011/11/hearty-chicken-stew-with-butternut-squash-quinoa-recipe/>

