

Words of Wellness

November 2010

DREAM UP BETTER HEALTH

Science shows that simple self-analysis of your dreams can help you sleep better, live healthier, and feel happier. Here's how.

Put Yourself in the Dream after Waking

Because every person's life is unique, it's important to uncover the specific emotions or situations that may have inspired your dream.

"When you have a dream, you've got to grab it and never let go."
- Carol Burnett

Create a napping nook

String up a hammock style nook in your home. A special quilt or lavender scented pillow spray creates a relaxing atmosphere.



Confront your "Dreamons"

Why do we have bad dreams? People who experience trauma/stress in their lives often relive it while asleep. Our subconscious often copes with the difficult times in our lives through our dreams. To develop a take-charge mindset, try "dream intervention." Before going to bed, reflect on what may be bothering you and imagine more positive outcomes. Your dream content may soon become less stressful.



Suggestions: A warm beverage makes us happy and trusting. Grab a cup of hot herbal tea or warm milk before bed.

Make your Bedroom a Restful Place to Sleep

There should be no reason to settle for anything less than a perfect sleep. Your bedroom should be quiet and relaxing. Unwelcome noise or light, an uncomfortable or worn-out mattress and foundation, a room that is too warm or too cold can prevent you from getting the comfortable sleep that your body needs.

Celebrate the Cat Nap

A 45-minute nap improves learning and memory. The biphasic sleep schedule (which involves taking a nap in addition to sleeping at night) may help us move information from the



hippocampus to the prefrontal cortex, where it becomes part of our long-term memory. Scientists have found that naps make us more alert and more creative, improve our mood, and increase our productivity. A nap is not a nap without light. It should be soft and filtered and gentle. Researchers suggest that naps are exceedingly effective in clearing our minds so we can fill them up again.

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The Enemies of Sound Sleep

1. **Alarm clocks** – An alarm clock that interrupts your sleep damages your memories, your ability to learn, your mood and temper, your relationships, your ability to focus and overall intellectual performance!
2. **Shift work** – The constant switching of the sleep rhythm from day to night and vice versa forces the body to do things it does not want to do, which causes harm
3. **Alcohol** – suppresses deep sleep, produces sleep fragmentation, and relaxes the upper airway muscles worsening snoring and even obstructive sleep apnea.
4. **Smoking** – Subliminal overnight craving for nicotine disrupts sleep!
5. **Caffeine** – #1 enemy of sleep. Taken at night, caffeine can induce heart arrhythmia, irritability, overwhelming tiredness, depression and stomach aggravation.



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How to Get a Good Sleep

- Spa Day
- Yoga
- Exercise (deep breathing)
- Fresh air
- Relaxation

