

# Sleep Tips!

**Sleep problems are one of the most common and recognised core symptoms of menopause.** Guidelines to support decision making for women with sleep problems however are lacking. Sleep concerns are something 83% of menopausal women suffer from sleep issues. Whether it's the inability to fall asleep, stay asleep and/or wake up feeling refreshed SLEEP is a major concern for many and the core problem of other hormonal concerns.

## **Melatonin levels are also affected by:**

- Low iron
- Low Vitamin D
- High Cortisol
- Overexposure to Artificial Light Exposure
- Eating too little and over training: ie overstressing your nervous system
- Poor Gut Health and Microbiome
- Overuse of Caffeine
- Unmanaged Stress
- Irregular sleep patterns

## **SO what can you do?**

**1 - Reduce cortisol levels in the evening** (I made a separate doc on this, but it overlaps with this)

Keep stress levels low and the body calm in the evening. Ensure you have a good wind down routine in the evening and avoid activities that can spike cortisol ie looking at work emails before bed/scrolling. You can add a lovely Yoga Nidra to your sleep routine at night. (Orgasms help too!!)

## **2 - Avoid eating TOO close to your bedtime**

During menopause, gut digestion slows, hence eating less volume of food at night reduces insulin load. Studies show high insulin disturbs melatonin production

### **3 - Manage overall stress/anxiety levels**

As estrogen levels decrease during menopause our body naturally produces more cortisol, meaning women become less stress resilient and it's very easy to exist in that "fight or flight" mode. Ensuring you have solid consistent tools to reduce and manage stress levels will help reduce cortisol levels and help aid sleep quality

### **4 - Eat more anti inflammatory foods**

The American Heart Association found that women following a more anti inflammatory diet during menopause had a better overall sleep efficiency - I also see this as being a key difference in reducing night sweats

### **5 - Have a plant based protein source at night**

If you struggle with Night Sweats, switching up your evening protein source from animal based to plant based can aid reduction.

→ Note ensuring you are consuming **enough Vit E (15mg) and Omega 3 (430 mg) type foods, consuming min 25g fiber a day** and having a diet featuring heavily of anti inflammatory diets is more effective overall.

We need to ensure those elements are in place first then IF the individual is still struggling with night sweats we will swap the evening protein source

### **6 - A good night's sleep starts in the morning.**

Morning light exposure is important to reset the circadian clock. Melatonin should be high at night and low in the morning. Light in the eyes in the morning has the single most influence on resetting the circadian clock.

**Try to have a short - even 10 min is great - morning Mindfulness Practice.** Set up a little place in your house, or bedroom, where you can return to YOU, and can peacefully sit for a few minutes to set the tone for the day. And in the evening, you can add some Nidra Yoga. Lot's of you-tube recordings you can choose from. I like this one: