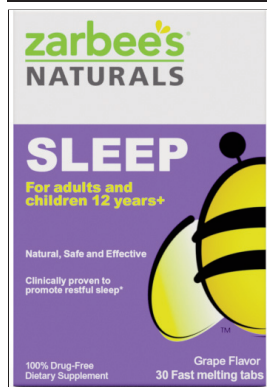


Healthy Sleep Tips to Help the Whole Family Catch Some Zzzz's by Dr. Zak Zarbock, MD



Sleep is a precious commodity, and most adults and kids aren't getting enough. You can stave off illness, moodiness, and all-around fatigue if you simply get a little more shut-eye every night. A bonus? It can also help you look better. However, let's face it, very few of us are getting the recommended amount of shut-eye that experts recommend.

While adults only need between 7-9 hours of sleep on average each night, school-age children need nine to 12 hours of shut-eye at night. According to the U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, up to 25 percent of children have difficulty falling or staying asleep. And while studies reveal inconsistent bedtimes and lack of quality rest can set off a chain reaction of fatigue-related health and behavior issues, parents are often left feeling helpless.

Despite early skepticism, melatonin supplements are increasingly gaining acceptance, with many adults using melatonin to combat travel jet-lag or to help wind down in states of insomnia at night. Studies on melatonin use in children have found it to be effective, particularly in reducing the time it takes to fall asleep, and the American Academy of Sleep Medicine considers temporary use safe for children.

As a pediatrician, my view is that an adult or child shouldn't need to take something to fall asleep every night. Sleep is critical to health and plays an important role in our ability to concentrate, our demeanor and attitude, energy level and even immune system. When routines are interrupted, especially with children, a small dose of melatonin can help us get back on track quickly.

As a father of four boys, I understand the slightest disruption to your family's hard-won bedtime schedule can throw off a child's sleep cycle. I reached for melatonin when my own son's nightly reading routine slipped into a habit of late-night marathons that left him cranky and tired the next morning. I gave him Zarbee's Children's Sleep tablets for three nights until he settled back into his normal bedtime schedule. My son still reads before bed, but now he starts earlier and we have a strictly enforced lights out time.

Daylight Savings Time, back-to-school transitions, and vacations - especially travel that takes you to a new time zone - are some of the most common sleep culprits I experience and hear about from parents of patients. Even sleepovers and the occasional late night can wreak havoc on a kid's sleep pattern for days. That's when melatonin is appropriate. It's like a reset button for your bedtime routine. I developed Zarbee's Sleep and Zarbee's Children's Sleep for those exact situations where you need a little extra help to ease yourself (or your little one) into restful and peaceful sleep.

Zarbee's Sleep is a safe and effective remedy for occasional sleeplessness. Sleep contains clinically proven melatonin to promote restful sleep, along with I-theanine to aid relaxation. The ingredients in Zarbee's Sleep are natural, non-habit forming and won't leave you feeling groggy the next day.

Zarbee's Children's Sleep contains just 1 mg of clinically proven melatonin, a hormone bodies naturally produce as part of the sleep cycle, promoting restful sleep* in children 3 years and older. The ingredients in Zarbee's Children's Sleep are natural, non-habit forming and won't leave little ones feeling groggy the next day. The grape flavored chewable tablets are gluten, drug and dairy-free.

Zarbee's Sleep and Zarbee's Children's Sleep has a SRP of \$8.99 for 30 tablets and is available at major retailers nationwide including CVS, Target, Amazon and www.zarbees.com.



Good "Sleep Hygiene," especially consistency, is what's needed for long-term sleep success.

Here are Six Tips to Getting a Good Night's Sleep:

Sleep Tip #1. Consistency is Key. Nothing is more important to sleep than a consistent schedule; whenever possible keep routines and sleep schedules the same every night of the week. For children, avoid letting them stay up later and sleep in longer on the weekends. The three-hour shift in your child's sleep cycle is like the jet lag felt the morning after a flight from New York to California.

Sleep Tip #2. Create a Sleep Friendly Bedroom. Bedrooms should be a dark, quiet and slightly cool place where you feel completely comfortable. For children, get rid of television sets and other bedroom distractions. Avoid using the bedroom for punishments or time-outs. You can also equip your child to handle nighttime fears by providing a nightlight, stuffed animals, or flashlight.

Sleep Tip #3. Stick to a Routine. Dedicating 20-30 minutes each night to the same bedtime routine is great for adults, but even more important for children. Routines allow children the time to prepare for sleep. Dim the lights and turn down the volume. Avoid high-energy play too close to bedtime, as it can leave children feeling "wired" for several hours.

Sleep Tip #4. Go 'E-Free' in The Evenings. In our device driven world, it's not enough to just keep the TV off before bed. Studies have shown that the light emitted from electronics, including handheld devices, electronic books and video games, can interfere with normal sleep cycles.

Sleep Tip #5. Brighten the Day and Stay Active. The morning sun or other bright lights will help shift the timing of your natural sleep cycle. Early light exposure will result in earlier evening drowsiness. Daily physical activity will also improve your energy in the day and your ability to fall asleep.

Sleep Tip #6. And Finally, Know the Numbers. It's important to acknowledge how many hours of sleep is needed for each age group and if you or your family are hitting the optimum sleep hours for each individual.

Cortisol, Babies and Sleep Training by Angela Walsh



Some people do not support sleep training because they believe it's stressful for babies. They cite a rise in the cortisol levels of the child, as proof of their beliefs. In actuality, however, using proven sleep-training methods, creates less stress on babies and families.

Cortisol is a stress hormone that is produced in the adrenal glands. It's a hormone that responds to our fight-or-flight instinct, by raising blood pressure and blood sugar, as sudden bursts of energy are needed. In adults, cortisol levels rise in the morning and decrease at night. In newborn babies, cortisol levels peak every 12 hours and are not related to night or day which is one reason why babies experience day/night confusion when it comes to sleep. Once a baby reaches the age of 3 or 4 months, the pattern of cortisol production resembles an adult's patterns; rising in the morning and falling at night.

One of the main goals of sleep-training is teaching a baby how to self soothe, so that they don't experience disruptive night wakings and the constant need for help falling asleep. So while it is true that a baby's cortisol level can rise during this process, it is also true that cortisol levels rise when babies are sleep deprived. In fact, they are much more likely to have chronically high levels of cortisol when they don't sleep properly, and don't experience the restorative sleep they need. In turn, this sets up a vicious cycle where sleep becomes even more elusive.

The long-term benefits of a child being able to get the consolidated sleep he or she needs at night, and a nap-time, cannot be overstated. As a child sleep consultant, I know that morning and afternoon naps serve two different purposes, outside of the obvious need for rest. Morning naps are cognitively restorative, whilst afternoon naps are physically restorative.

In addition, more studies point to sleep deprivation as being a contributing factor of childhood diabetes, obesity, anxiety, depression, inability to focus, hyperactivity, over diagnosis and incorrect diagnosis of attention deficit hyperactive disorder, and lower reading and math scores. Sleep deprivation is particularly taxing for mom who is at a higher risk for postpartum depression when she is not getting the rest she needs. Sleep deprivation also takes a toll on marriages and the workplace. It also needs to be pointed out that a baby who is cared for by a chronically depressed mother, will experience a rise in cortisol levels due to the mom's inability to show concern and sensitivity.

There will always be those who feel sleep-training is too stressful for the child, that in the long run, it can cause psychological, emotional and mental harm. However, a 2012 study published in Pediatrics, strongly supports sleep-training as a healthy part of development. This study showed that babies who were sleep-trained using either the Ferber method or the camping-out method, did not have an increased

risk of emotional, psychological, or behavioral disorders at age 6. In fact, babies who were in the control group and not sleep-trained, actually had a higher rate of behavior disorders. Furthermore, mothers of infants who were not sleep-trained had a higher rate of depression.

When it comes to sleep-training, more than likely, there will be crying, and yes, a rise in cortisol in the beginning. But what needs to be considered is the benefit a child, (and consequently an entire family) derives from experiencing consolidated, unbroken sleep: happy, calm, and a greater ability to learn. When sleep-training takes place in a home where the child feels secure, cared for, and loved, and the parents are working to achieve the best outcome for everyone's benefit, then it's a win-win situation, and cortisol the stress hormone, can be kept at an appropriate and healthy level.

If you want to pre-empt sleep problems, or if you already know your child is not getting the sleep he/she needs, start by making sure your baby sleeps in a room that is: a) Cool: The optimal temperature is 68-70 degrees. b) Quiet: A white noise machine is perfect at blocking out indoor and outdoor noise. Avoid using mobiles or song machines as they are over-stimulating. c) Dark: On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the darkest, you want 10! (Incidentally, these tips work for adults as well!)

Once your baby reaches the age of 4 months, you can begin to put him or her on a nap schedule: The morning nap will begin between 8:15 and 9 am; the afternoon nap will begin between 11:30 am and 1:00 pm; If your baby is under the age of 8 months, there will probably be the need for a half hour nap later in the afternoon.

As the mom of 4 grown children, I can tell you firsthand how stressful parenthood can be. I can also tell you that if you can avoid, or overcome sleep issues, you will minimize many of the challenges, while increasing much of the joy, of being a parent.

Angela Walsh is a Certified Child Sleep Consultant, and the founder of Babes in Sleepland. She can help tired and stressed families get back on track, and get the sleep they need and desire. To learn more about Angela and how she can help you, visit her website, babesinsleepland.com



We all know about not sleeping with our cell phone by our beds...but the hours we spend on our cell phones daily has been linked to headaches, mood imbalance, cognitive dysfunction and sleep impairment according to researchers from Wayne State University in the US and Sweden's Karolinska Institute. They reported their findings at Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Progress in Electromagnetics Research Symposium (PIERS). Researchers say the most dramatic effect cell phone usage has is that it causes users to have trouble falling and staying asleep at night. More than HALF the subjects suffered from the reported adverse symptoms.