

5 of the Best Foods to Battle Insomnia

What we eat affects our body in more ways than we can imagine. And with this in mind, it can also affect our mood and how we sleep; some foods can promote drowsiness and some can cause insomnia. It's true, unlike drugs, food may not take effect on the body as quickly, but what you eat can still be the underlying cause of sleepless nights.



So how do foods affect our body and cause insomnia? During digestion, certain foods can stimulate the production and / or stimulation of certain brain chemicals whereas others can stimulate certain hormones that gives us a surge of energy and so prevent our natural sleep cycle.

Here's a list of the top 5 food which help you sleep

Bananas

If there was ever a food that's made for sleep then it's the banana – with an excellent proportion of potassium, magnesium and also tryptophan, these nutrients are ideal for promoting sleep. Tryptophan is an amino acid which is needed by your body to make serotonin, a neurotransmitter which is also known as the 'happiness hormone'; serotonin can help lessen anxiety and boost mood, all of which can help you sleep better. The potassium and magnesium are used by the body in muscle activity and nerve conduction and its role in helping you get a better night's sleep is by helping to reduce brain activity – so there's less likelihood of your thoughts keeping you up at night. These nutrients can also help relax muscles.

If you're struggling to sleep at night, have half to a whole banana an hour or so before you go to bed. You can even whizz it up with some warm milk (or nut milk if you prefer) and some turmeric, ginger, salt and black pepper for the ultimate 'sleep easy' drink.

Tart Cherries

Similarly, to bananas, tart cherries (also known as sour cherries or Montmorency cherries), contain a whole host of nutrients which promote sleep, including B vitamins, magnesium and potassium. However, it is best known for containing melatonin.

“Montmorency cherries contain high levels of melatonin, the brain chemical naturally produced by the body to regulate the sleep-wake cycle,” says Philip Weeks, an expert on natural medicine. Indeed, a study by the School of Life Sciences at Northumbria University discovered that drinking 30ml of Montmorency cherry juice concentrate twice a day for 7 days saw participants record an increase in their total sleep time by 25 minutes and increase their sleep quality by 6%.

Try taking a tablespoon of [Cherry Active](#) (pure Montmorency concentrate) twice a day to bring on the zzzz's.

Oatmeal

We often think of oats as being something that only appears at breakfast time. But it may be time to start eating oats a few hours before bedtime. And here's why... Firstly, it's a good source of complex carbohydrates, so it breaks down more slowly than simple carbohydrates such as white bread and white pasta, and doesn't provide the sugar high. Plus, it doesn't overload the digestive system. Secondly, it contains our favourite sleep nutrients – magnesium and potassium. Enjoy a small warm bowl of porridge with milk or nut milk and a few seeds and nuts sprinkled on top – Brazil nuts are ideal.

Almonds

Always have almonds in your house if you want to get a good night's sleep! They're rich in sleep-inducing B-vitamins, calcium, iron, zinc, potassium and magnesium. For such little things, they are certainly packed with nutrients. All of these help regulate brain activity, relax your body and increase the secretion of melatonin, which is vital for sleep. As if that wasn't enough, almonds are also rich in tryptophan which are used in the production of serotonin and melatonin.

Turkey

Turkey isn't just for Christmas, but also for times when you can't sleep properly. Out of all common protein sources, turkey is an ideal source of tryptophan which helps the body produce serotonin which helps settle your mood and provide a calm state of mind. As well as tryptophan, it also contains B vitamins, calcium, magnesium and potassium. Why not enjoy a light turkey salad for dinner?

If you're still struggling to sleep and your diet isn't helping, then maybe it's time to turn to another non-invasive method, such as H7? By stimulating your H7 acupressure point through a special patch, this calms your body and mind and sets you up for a good night's sleep. H7 Insomnia Control has a 75% success rate for improving sleep. [Buy it at www.scrubsuk.com or on Amazon.](#)