



## **Food to improve sleep**

*Eliseeva Tatyana*, editor-in-chief of the EdaPlus.info project

*Tkacheva Natalya*, herbalist, nutritionist

*E-mail: [eliseeva.t@edaplus.info](mailto:eliseeva.t@edaplus.info), [tkacheva.n@edaplus.info](mailto:tkacheva.n@edaplus.info)*

**Abstract.** Perhaps a more mysterious and unknown phenomenon than sleep simply does not exist in our lives. Tired and exhausted, after a hard day of work, a person lies down in a warm and soft bed, relaxes, closes his eyes and... His arms and legs become heavy, his muscles languish, and his thoughts take him far beyond the limits of consciousness, where the brain draws new, sometimes incomprehensible, images...

Did you know that over the past twenty years, scientists have conducted more research in this area than in all previous years? As a result, they made a huge number of discoveries, and also reliably proved that sleep plays a vital role in the normalization of human life, directly influencing all his successes and failures.

**Key words:** food for sleep, recommendations, benefits, harm, beneficial properties, contraindications

## **Sleep and its role in scientific and technological progress**

Nowadays, the relationship between sleep and innovative technologies is obvious. And all because today human health is above all. Therefore, many world-famous companies that create gadgets, electrical appliances and other devices to make our lives easier have begun to add sleep specialists to their workforce. One striking example of this is the arrival of Roy Reiman, an expert in drug-free sleep improvement, to the Apple team. Moreover, he was invited specifically to work on the iWatch smartwatch, the goal of which is to maximally improve a person's quality of life and... monitor his health, in particular, choosing the best time for easy awakening.

## **Why is it so important to eat right before bed?**

One of the main conditions for sound and restful sleep is relaxation. At the same time, we are talking not only about the body, but also about the brain. This is extremely important to remember for people who, when going to bed, like to replay the events of the past day, analyzing them. Or make plans for the future. After all, the brain is excited not only by bad, but also by good thoughts. And along with his excitement, the long-awaited dream disappears, which is then very difficult to return.

However, experts say that there are products that help calm the central nervous system and, as a result, fall asleep. In their circle they even have their own name - "soporific". These include those that contain tryptophan, since it is this amino acid that helps the body produce serotonin. It is a neurotransmitter that slows down the transmission of nerve impulses and allows the brain to relax.

### **Top 10 products that help you fall asleep quickly and easily**

It is noteworthy that many physiologists and nutritionists are involved in the development of such a top list. Moreover, their lists have both similar and different products. But in everything, as they say, you need to look only for the good. So choose from them those that suit your taste:

1. Bananas [1] – they contain potassium [2] and magnesium [3], which relieve muscle tension and thereby allow you to relax. Renowned psychology doctor Shelby Friedman Harris advises eating half a banana and a handful of fresh nuts before bed: "This will give your body an excellent dose of a mixture of tryptophan and carbohydrates."
2. Crackers are carbohydrates [4] that raise blood sugar levels [5] and trigger the production of insulin, which in turn acts as a mild natural sleep aid. Moreover, it is insulin that has a positive effect on the production of tryptophan and serotonin in the body. By the way, crackers can be combined with peanut butter to improve the effect.
3. Cherries [6] – they contain melatonin, a hormone that regulates sleep. It is enough to eat a handful of these berries or drink a glass of cherry juice [7] an hour before bedtime.
4. Cereals, muesli or cereals are the same carbohydrates that work like crackers, especially when combined with milk. But in this case it is advisable to do without sugar. Since its excessive presence in the blood can have the opposite effect.
5. Jasmine rice is a variety of long grain rice. It promotes the production of glucose and, as a result, increases the levels of tryptophan and serotonin in the blood. However, you need to eat it at least four hours before bedtime.
6. Oatmeal [8] – it contains magnesium, calcium [9], silicon [10], potassium and phosphorus [11], which help you fall asleep quickly.
7. Fish – it contains omega-3 fatty acids [12], which are responsible for controlling blood pressure, as well as substances that stimulate the production of melanin and serotonin. Moreover, it is better to eat fish a couple of hours before bedtime.
8. Warm milk is the same as tryptophan.
9. Low-fat cheese - like milk, it contains tryptophan, which, combined with a small amount of protein, will allow you to quickly relax.
10. Kiwi [13] – this discovery is the result of recent research. Kiwi is a natural antioxidant [14]. Moreover, it contains potassium, which, among other things, improves heart function [15] and respiratory functions.

Summarizing all of the above, I would like to recall the words of nutritionist Christine Kirkpatrick that not all complex carbohydrates are equally useful in this case. In pursuit of sleep, "a person may incorrectly select "sleep-inducing" products, giving preference to the same donuts. Undoubtedly, these are carbohydrates that increase serotonin levels. But when combined with large amounts of sugar, they can cause a spike in blood levels." And this, in turn, will deprive you of sleep for a long time.

### **How to speed up the process of falling asleep**

**Firstly**, you need to go to bed only if you really feel extremely tired and want to sleep. Moreover, if after 15 minutes you still cannot fall asleep, it is better to read a book or even get up and do other things, waiting for a new influx of fatigue. Otherwise, you risk tossing and turning until late at night.

**Secondly**, you should avoid foods that prevent you from falling asleep. This:

- meat – it is slowly digested;
- alcohol – it excites the nervous system;
- coffee – it contains caffeine;
- dark chocolate - it also contains caffeine;
- ice cream - it contains a lot of sugar;
- Fatty and spicy food - it worsens the functioning of the heart and stomach.

**Thirdly**, you need to avoid intense physical activity before bed. By the way, this restriction in no way applies to sex. Since during sexual intercourse the body produces hormones that promote rapid sleep. And the next morning after it, a person will wake up cheerful and rested.

Sleep is a wonderful world. Moreover, scientists still cannot answer the question of why it is open to some people and not to others. However, be that as it may, the quality of a person's life depends on its quality. Remember this!

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*Eliseeva Tatyana*, editor-in-chief of the project EdaPlus.info

*Tkacheva Natalia*, phytotherapist, nutritionist

*E-mail*: eliseeva.t@edaplus.info, tkacheva.n@edaplus.info

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