

Life Begins With a Breath®
The Chinese Medicine Guide to Health
Courtesy of the Goodman Wellness Center

Ode to Sleeping

Yes, we should praise sleeping. It is the best thing that we can do for ourselves. To be truly healthy, you need air, water, food -- and sleep. Fatigue (having to drink four cups coffee each morning to wake up), poor concentration (forgot where you left your kids), anxiety, mood swings, depression and sinus congestion are just some of the symptoms that a person will get without sufficient sleep.

Plus, sleep is free entertainment. Yes I said, "Free Entertainment." After all, dreams don't cost anything and they are a requirement of good sleep. Who needs CSI or Survivor when you can climb Mount Everest for free and feel the rush of falling without actually dying?

Understanding the causes of poor sleep

There are two main reasons for poor sleep -- blood deficiency and heat. To get a clear understanding of the cause of poor sleep you need a little physiology. Blood is responsible for a healthy and happy mind. When you have the ability to think clearly, focus like a professional athlete and sleep like a baby, your blood is in excellent condition. Blood also keeps the mind at peace, kind of like a good stable mother and father having a good influence over their children. If the blood in the body becomes deficient, for reasons such as age, diet, lifestyle and over-thinking or worrying, the mind will suffer and your ability to sleep will be lost. Other symptoms associated with blood deficiency are anxiety, dry skin, poor vision, excessive worry and an overall feeling of fatigue.

Heat on the other hand stirs up the mind and makes it overly active. Compare it to what heat does to water. When water is at a normal temperature in a cooking pot it appears motionless. When heat is added, the water begins to warm and become active. Well, your body has its normal amount of heat that maintains a healthy and active life. When heat becomes overactive due to stress, diet (excess spicy or greasy food), smoking and alcohol, the mind becomes overly stimulated and begins to race. That in turns leads to the inability to sleep. Other symptoms due to heat affecting the mind include irritability, palpitations, headaches, red eyes and sometimes tongue ulcers.

Of course this is a shortened version of the causes of poor sleep and if you have any further questions please call the office at 949-460-9378. I would love to answer them.

Things you can do for yourself to improve your sleep

- Sit quietly and breathe for 15 minutes prior to going to bed: Yes, I said 15 minutes
- Do not eat sweets or large meals within one hour of bed, even the ice cream
- Go to bed at the same time each night, preferably by 10 p.m. at the latest: No, not that!
- Reduce exercise two hours prior to bed. Exercise is better in the morning or mid afternoon

Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine are incredible at treating poor sleep. If you or someone you know is suffering from poor sleep, please call Steven Goodman L.Ac. at 949-460-9378.

Five Minute Breathing Exercise to Relax

1. Sit with back straight and feet flat on the ground
2. Feel as if your head is held up by a string and relax your shoulders
3. Place the tip of the tongue on the roof of the mouth (relaxes the jaw)
4. Inhale for a count of 6-8 seconds and exhale for a count of 6-8 seconds
5. Your breathing should be silent
6. Do it for 25 breaths. If you loose count start again
7. After the 25th breath think of a moment in time that brought you extreme joy and place your thoughts on that moment. Your body should feel those same emotions again
8. End when you feel ready and place your thoughts on your lower abdomen

You'll feel almost as relaxed as after an acupuncture treatment

A Message from Steven M. Goodman L.Ac.

I would like to say thank you for your support through the years. I have been fortunate in this life to have found a profession that helps people and that I love. Your continued support, trust and faith in my abilities have allowed me to follow my calling and keep my doors open. It is because of you that I continue to have the ability to study, teach, and improve my skills as a Chinese medical practitioner (acupuncturist and herbalist). Thank you again and I hope you and your family have a great holiday season.

Take Care,

Steven