Welcome to Good Food News!

Sleep – we spend about a third of our lives doing it and in our hectic world, some of us might even consider it a necessary inconvenience. But over the last decade, science is finding more and more reasons why we should be paying attention to the quality time we spend with our pillow.

This issue we’re going to show you the amazing links between sleep habits and health, with our team providing a great range of practical tips to help you get the most out of your next 40 winks.

Sleep is key to whole person health, so we’ve got some great articles for you from the experts in whole person health, the team at Sanctuary Sanitarium Health and Wellbeing Village. Exercise Physiologist Michael Marthick shows us the most effective ways to exercise to enhance sleep, while Dietitian Maddison Fox gives us her top 5 tips for a good night’s sleep.

And as always, we’ve got some great recipes for you this issue, helping to make your dreams of healthy, delicious food come true.

Happy Reading!
Sleep Your Way to Better Health
While scientists are still discovering just why we need sleep, they have no doubt that lack of sleep, or sleep deprivation, results in a wide range of negative impacts on our bodies, in some cases even causing long-term health issues.

Tired Tots and Teens
According to the Australian Centre for Education in Sleep 20-30 percent of children and young people report that they are sleepy and want more sleep.

Good Mood Foods
What you eat can have a direct impact on how you feel. In fact, food is such a powerful mood-booster that emerging science has shown some nutrients may even protect against mild forms of depression.

Lentil Sheperds Pie
A delicious alternative to the traditional Shepherd's Pie.

- 10 mins Preparation
- 40 mins Cooking
- easy Difficulty
- 6 Serves
Gnocchi with spinach and walnuts

- Preparation: 5 mins
- Cooking: 10 mins
- Difficulty: medium
- Serves: 4

Move to Snooze

What time of the day do you think exercise would best help you sleep? Morning? Afternoon? Right before bed?

Pear Galette

- Preparation: 15 mins
- Cooking: 15 mins
- Difficulty: easy
- Serves: 8

Indian Spinach and Tofu Curry
5 Tips to a Good Night's Sleep
Following regular healthy sleep habits can mean the difference between restlessness and restful slumber. Researchers have identified a variety of beneficial practices that can help anyone maximise the hours they spend sleeping, even people suffering from insomnia, jet lag, or the challenges of shift work.

Read more ...

Napping: A Sleep Snack
Power naps, nanna naps or simply catching a few Zs, whatever your fancy, napping does have its benefits.

Read more ...

Recipe of the Week
The Sanitarium Nutrition Service has a FREE Recipe of the Week email service.

Subscribe and once a week you will receive a scrumptious plant-based recipe that's easy to whip up and is guaranteed to be a winner with family and friends. Our recipes also come with a nutrition profile and useful cooking tips.

The free Recipe of the Week email is great for solving the problem of 'what's for dinner?' and perfect for cooking inspiration. So why not join up now?

Read more ...

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Sleep Your Way to Better Health

While scientists are still discovering just why we need sleep, they have no doubt that lack of sleep, or sleep deprivation, results in a wide range of negative impacts on our bodies, in some cases even causing long-term health issues.

We’re all familiar with that terrible feeling of a bad night’s sleep – you’re cranky, it’s hard to concentrate, and your get-up-and-go has gone. A good night’s sleep can help overcome some of these short-term symptoms, but research is suggesting that the negative effects of poor sleep can extend beyond the short-term.

Scientific evidence shows the risk factors associated with sleep deprivation include:

- Depression/anxiety
- Obesity
- Heart disease
- Impaired immunity
- Car accidents
- Decreased cognitive performance and impaired decision making.

As little as four to eight hours of sleep deprivation has been shown to impact the immune system, highlighting just how important sleep is in healing and maintaining our bodies.

There’s also increasing amounts of research linking poor sleep and obesity. A US study found those who sleep six hours a night, just one hour less than ideal, were 23 per cent more likely to be very overweight. While a comprehensive review of 10 years of research found “short sleepers” were twice as likely to be obese, compared to people who had sufficient sleep.

What causes the link between lack of sleep and obesity is still being investigated, but one theory is based on changes to hormones. Sleep deprivation has been associated with producing higher levels of an appetite stimulating hormone called ghrelin, as well as lower levels of an appetite suppressing hormone called leptin.

And it’s a slippery slide. While lack of sleep may increase the risk of obesity, being obese in turn increases the risk of sleep deprivation. People who are overweight are at a greater risk of sleep apnoea, a condition in which sleep is disrupted due to pauses in breathing or shallow breathing while you sleep.

What is a good night’s sleep?

Sleep needs differ from person to person and changes with age, but research seems to point seven or eight hours of sleep being optimal for the average adult.

And you can get too much of a good thing. There are studies also linking too much sleep with negative impacts on health, but the area of excess sleep remains controversial and any effects on health appear to be much less than sleep deprivation. The key point to takeaway is that it is important to maintain regular sleep patterns and strive for balance as part of a healthy lifestyle.

While we should be aiming for seven or eight hours of slumber, not all sleep is equal. Quality of sleep is as important as quantity.

We’ve all had those nights when we get eight hours sleep, but still feel tired the next day, this can be a result of something stopping us from reaching the deeper stages of sleep.

Sleep can be broadly categorised into two categories, rapid eye movement (REM) sleep and non REM sleep. REM sleep happens about once every 90 - 120 minutes and is thought to be when the bulk of dreaming occurs.

Non REM sleep makes up about three quarters of sleep time for an adult and can be broken down into another four broad stages.

- Stage one is drowsiness or dozing,
- Stage two is when you lose awareness of your surroundings and your breathing and heart rate drop, and
- Stages three and four are deep sleep. This is what we are aiming for. Deep sleep is when the muscles relax; breathing, heart rate and blood pressure drop even further; and our bodies do their magic with growth and repair processes taking place.

There are a number of ways we can work to improve our quality of sleep and our ability to achieve deep sleep, with some practical tips in this edition of Good Food News.

Often in our time poor lifestyles, a good night’s sleep is seen as a luxury, but nothing could be further from the truth, it is a necessity for good health and something we should all be investing time in.

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"Mummy, I'm too tired." If that's a common complaint from your children, you're not alone.

According to the Australian Centre for Education in Sleep 20-30 percent of children and young people report that they are sleepy and want more sleep.

While there are variations in the amount of sleep children and teens need, it is widely accepted that children need more sleep than adults.

- Infants will sleep for 16-20 hours a day.
- Toddlers and preschoolers need approximately 12 hours sleep a day.
- Primary school age children may need 10-11 hours a night.
- Teens benefit from nine - 10 hours sleep a night.

Just like us, children, from infants to teens, can be disadvantaged by a lack of sleep. This is often most apparent once they start school as sleep can affect memory, attention span, ability to learn, their behaviour and emotions. It may also impede creativity, decision making, problem solving and general health and wellbeing.

Our sleep patterns change as we grow and develop. At birth, infants’ sleep patterns are not related to daytime and night-time cycles. This develops over time with changes to sleep patterns continuing right through to adulthood.

The teenage years can be particularly difficult for children to get enough sleep. Hormonal changes that delay evening tiredness, along with school and social pressures, can make it tough for teens to achieve the nine to 10 hours of sleep they need. This may help to explain why some parents struggle to get their teens up for school or out of bed before lunchtime on weekends.

Tips for helping your children get a good night's sleep

- Children thrive on routine - set regular bedtimes and wake times.
- Limit television and computer games for an hour before bed.
- Try an earlier dinner so that your children finish eating a few hours before bed. It's also good to avoid caffeine, sugary drinks or food, and spicy foods three or four hours before bed.
- Set aside some quite time before bed being sure to limit vigorous exercise or activities an hour before bedtime.

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Good Mood Food

We all know there are many things that can affect our mood, from stress at work, the weather, or even what's for lunch. But more and more research suggests that the effect food has on our mood is more complicated than simply feeling uninspired by lunch time leftovers.

According to one UK study – The Food and Mood Project – eighty percent of people reported a significant improvement in mood swings, depression and anxiety when their eating style was based on ‘supporter foods’ like vegetables, fruits, nuts, seeds, wholegrain foods, oily fish and water. The researchers also found that ‘stressors’ on mood were foods containing excess refined sugar, caffeine and alcohol. The foods identified as ‘stressors’ initially stimulated the body but eventually left people feeling depleted and more stressed because they provided little nutrition.

So what does this mean in day-to-day terms?

Eating a balance of ‘supporter foods’ may be helpful in managing anxiety and changes in mood. Choosing meals based on whole plant foods, eating a good breakfast including wholegrain breads or cereals and making water your main drink can be a great start.

Try to avoid ‘stressor’ foods such as caffeine, alcohol and refined sugary foods like lollies and soft drinks. Often we find ourselves reaching for sugary foods at snack time. Why not keep a mix of nuts, seeds and dried fruit handy as an easy snack of ‘supporter foods’?

While food can play a role in our moods, as mentioned earlier, it is not the only factor, so it is important to seek advice and talk to a professional if you have been feeling down or depressed for more than two weeks.

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Lentil Sheperds Pie

Ingredients
1 tablespoon oil
1 medium onion, chopped
1 stick celery, finely chopped
1 large carrot, finely chopped
1 teaspoon curry powder
500g jar tomato pasta sauce (reduced salt)
2 x 415g can brown lentils
1 cup frozen peas
1kg potatoes, peeled and chopped evenly
1 tablespoon margarine
1/2 cup So Good soy or dairy milk

Method
1 Heat oil in a medium pot and sauté onion, celery and carrot until soft. Add curry powder and sauté for 1 minute.
2 Add pasta sauce, lentils and peas and bring to boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes.
3 Place potatoes in a large saucepan and cover with hot water. Bring to boil, then reduce heat and simmer until tender. Drain potatoes and add margarine and soy milk. Mash until smooth.
4 Spoon lentil mixture into a large oven proof dish or 6 x 1 cup oven proof dishes. Top with mashed potato. Bake in a moderate oven, 180°C, for 40 minutes.

Nutritional Information

Per Serve
Kilojoules 1440 kJ
Calories 345 cal
Protein 16 g
Total fat 8 g
Carbohydrate 46 g
Sodium 690 mg
Potassium 1425 mg
Calcium 90 mg
Iron 4.7 mg
Fibre 11 g

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Gnocchi with spinach and walnuts

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/3 cup walnut pieces, chopped
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1/3 cup currants
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 120g baby spinach leaves
- 1/4 cup salt reduced vegetable stock
- 625g fresh potato gnocchi

Method

1. Heat 1 teaspoon oil in a non-stick frying pan over medium heat. Add walnuts and cook, stirring often, until golden. Transfer to a plate. Set aside.

2. Add remaining oil to pan. Add onion and sauté for 3 minutes or until tender. Add currants and crushed garlic. Cook, stirring often, for 1-2 minutes until currants are plump. Add spinach and stock. Gently toss until spinach begins to wilt.

3. Meanwhile, cook gnocchi, following instructions on the packet, until al dente.

4. Drain gnocchi and immediately return to the pan. Add spinach mixture and walnuts. Gently toss and serve.

Tips

Be guided by the packet instructions, but a general rule of thumb when cooking gnocchi, is that they’re ready once they have risen to the surface - only taking a few minutes.

If you would like a recipe for homemade gnocchi, email us at nutrition@sanitarium.com.au

Sultanas can be used instead of currants in this recipe if you have them handy.

Nutritional Information

Per Serve

- Kilojoules 1720 kJ
- Calories 411 cal
- Protein 9 g
- Total fat 16 g
- Carbohydrate 55 g
- Sodium 145 mg
- Potassium 625 mg
- Calcium 65 mg
- Iron 2.8 mg
Gnocchi with spinach and walnuts

Fibre 6 g
Move to Snooze

What time of the day do you think exercise would best help you sleep? Morning? Afternoon? Right before bed?

Trying to literally wear yourself out with exercise just before bed can make it harder to fall to sleep. Vigorous exercise raises your body temperature and stimulates the body to secrete the stress hormone cortisol, which helps keep the brain alert. In fact, for a sound slumber, it’s best to finish any exercise three hours before bedtime.

Exercising first thing in the morning is a great way to start the day and puts the wheels in motion for a good night’s rest. Morning exercise can relieve stress and improve mood, which both indirectly improve sleep. To further enhance its sleep-promoting benefits, you should exercise outdoors. Natural light provides an external cue (also called a zeitgeber, what a great name!) for the body’s sleep patterns – it has the biggest impact on our sleep cycle.

While morning exercise is a good option, when it comes to having a direct effect on getting a good night’s sleep, vigorous exercise in the late afternoon or early evening is the best. Exercising at this time uses the increase in your body temperature as a positive, because by the time you go to bed your body temperature will have fallen creating a natural trigger for sleep.

Take home message: Exercise when your schedule allows it and aim for at least 30 minutes per day. If you are having sleep problems exercising at least three hours before bedtime may be beneficial.

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Pear Galette

Ingredients
2 sheets puff pastry, quartered
2 x 425g can pears in natural juice, drained
2 tablespoons honey, melted

Method
1. Line baking trays with baking paper. Place pastry squares on paper.
2. Arrange two pears on each square of pastry. Roll sides of pastry in to meet pears. Brush with melted honey.
3. Bake in a very hot oven, 220°C, for 15 minutes or until golden. Serve warm with icing sugar.

Tips
Pears are a great energy source but apples can be substituted if pears aren't available or in season.

Nutritional Information
Per Serve
Sodium 190 mg
Calcium 10 mg
Carbohydrate 32 g
Calories 230 cal
Kilojoules 960 kJ
Total fat 9 g
Fibre 3 g
Iron 0.8 mg
Potassium 140 mg
Protein 3 g
Indian Spinach and Tofu Curry

Ingredients
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 teaspoon grated fresh ginger
1 clove garlic, crushed
1 onion diced
2 tablespoons medium curry paste
375g packet of firm tofu, cut into cubes
2 tablespoons pumpkin seed kernels
8 cups (250g) English spinach leaves (or frozen spinach)
2 tomatoes, diced
4 cups steamed brown rice

Method
1 Heat a frypan over medium heat, add oil, ginger, garlic, onion, and curry paste. Cook for 2 minutes stirring constantly until fragrant.
2 Add tofu and fry for 5-8 minutes until tofu is coated. Add pumpkin kernels and cook for 2 minutes. Add spinach, place a lid on the pan and cook for a further 3 minutes until spinach is soft.
3 Add the tomatoes and stir until combined and heated through. Serve with steamed rice. Serves 4.

Tips
You can buy tofu from supermarkets, usually in the refrigerated section. Cover any unused tofu with plenty of cold water and store in a container in the fridge. Change the water daily to keep the tofu fresh.
Tofu provides the body with iron, calcium, protein, folate and thiamin plus many other nutrients too.
To marinate tofu: place in a shallow dish and cover with marinade, leave for about 30mins. Use a combination of soy sauce, sesame oil, garlic, lemon or honey, you can even try basil pesto, homemade or from the shops. There’s an abundance of marinades in the supermarkets that are quick and easy to use.

Nutritional Information

Per Serve
Kilojoules 1950 kJ
Calories 465 cal
Protein 17 g
Total fat 14 g
Carbohydrate 63 g
Sodium 480 mg
Potassium 740 mg
Calcium 265 mg
Indian Spinach and Tofu Curry

Iron 8.5 mg
Fibre 8 g
The secret to getting a good night’s sleep, every night, is establishing a routine. Following regular healthy sleep habits can mean the difference between restlessness and restful slumber. Researchers have identified a variety of beneficial practices that can help anyone maximise the hours they spend sleeping, even people suffering from insomnia, jet lag, or the challenges of shift work.

1. **Keep a regular sleep cycle.**
   - It will make you feel more refreshed and energised, than sleeping the same number of hours at irregular times. This holds true even if you alter your bedtime by only an hour or two. It's therefore important to make sure you:
     - Set a regular bedtime - even on weekends.
     - Wake up at the same time every day – if you're getting enough sleep you should wake up naturally without an alarm.
     - Be smart about napping – if you take a nap in the early afternoon limit it to 30 minutes.

2. **Turn your bedroom into a slumber land.**
   - keep your bedroom quiet, dark, and cool.
   - Invest in a comfortable mattress and pillows.
   - keep distractions out of the bedroom – kick out computers, televisions and work materials.
   - establish a soothing pre-sleep routine – read a book, take a bath, listen to music etc.

3. **Boost Your Melatonin.**
   - Melatonin is a naturally occurring hormone that helps regulate your sleep-wake cycle. Its production is controlled by light exposure.
     - Increase light exposure during the day – let in the light first thing in the morning, get out of the office for a quick sun break during the day and let as much light as possible into your home/workspace during the day.
     - Boost your melatonin production at night by dimming the lights – limit reading or working off backlit screens e.g. a computer, and use lower-wattage light bulbs in your bedroom.

4. **Relax to get back to sleep.**
   - It’s normal to wake up during the night, good sleepers may not even remember they are doing it. However, when you have trouble getting back to sleep try the following strategies:
     - Make relaxation your goal – stress and anxiety encourages your body to stay awake. Try various relaxation techniques such as visualisation, deep breathing or meditation.
     - keep calm – if you have been awake for more than 15 minutes get out of bed and try reading a book.
     - Postpone worrying and brainstorming – keep a notepad and pen next to your bed and make notes of any thoughts, then you can check it in the morning.

5. **Know when to see a doctor.**
   - If you’ve tried these tips and are still struggling with sleep problems, be sure to visit your doctor.

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Napping: A Sleep Snack

Power naps, nanna naps or simply catching a few Zs, whatever your fancy, napping does have its benefits.

A nap is commonly defined as a short sleep, usually during daylight hours, taken at a time outside of a person’s regular sleeping hours.

While naps are too short to achieve deep sleep, and therefore do not provide all the benefits of a seven or eight hour block, they can help boost your performance, keep you alert and are a great way to take a short break and relax.

Naps can, however, have negative side effects. We all know that feeling of waking up from a nap and feeling groggy, this is something referred to as sleep inertia. It typically only lasts between a few minutes to half an hour, before the benefits of the nap kick in. Napping too long or too close to regular sleep times can also lead to sleep impairment.

So if you’re a devotee of the nap, or want to road test the benefits, try following our top tips:

Keep it short: 20-30 minutes is enough to gain benefits to alertness, while helping to ensure sleep patterns aren’t affected.

Keep it peaceful: You’ll nap most effectively in this short period of time if you pick a comfortable, peaceful place to help sleep come quickly.

Keep it away from regular sleep: There are no hard and fast rules about how long before bedtime you should not nap, but napping should not interfere with regular sleep. Cultures that traditionally practice napping, siestas, usually nap just after midday.