

Sleep & Nutrition

Why is sleep important?

Adequate sleep can lead to increased markers of performance, including:

- Faster sprint time
- Increased endurance
- Decreased heart rate
- Positive changes in mood
- Increased growth hormone and testosterone
- Controlled appetite-regulating hormones
- Beneficial effects on glucose tolerance, lean mass and dietary intake

What is nutrition's role?

Our metabolism is affected by our sleep quantity and quality. When we have enough sleep, we have positive effects on metabolism, including:

- Increased protein synthesis (promote building muscle)
- Increased insulin sensitivity (deliver sugars to cells that need them)
- Increased satiety (feel full longer)

Tips

A good strategy is to eat your post-game meal until you feel satisfied, not stuffed. Get your sleep snack and eat that about 60-90 minutes before you normally go to bed.

Try to avoid or limit alcohol and caffeine before bed. Both have shown to decrease sleep quantity and quality. Caffeine has a half life of 5-6 hours which means it takes that long for the caffeine to start leaving your system.

Try to avoid spicy and fried foods close to bedtime as they can cause acid re flux, making it harder to fall asleep. High fat foods before bed can also make it harder for you to digest which can negatively affect your sleep quality.



Foods to promote sleep



TART CHERRY JUICE

Tart cherries increase circulating **melatonin** levels, improve sleep time and improve sleep quality. Drinking tart cherry juice has also shown to decrease signs of inflammation which can speed up recovery.

Melatonin is a hormone naturally produced in the brain that helps regulate sleep and wakefulness.



MILK, CHEESE, YOGURT, BEANS, CHICKEN & TURKEY

Tryptophan is a precursor to serotonin and melatonin. Eating foods high in tryptophan have shown to increase melatonin levels in the body and improve sleep.

Tryptophan is an amino acid that helps induce sleep. It is a precursor to serotonin (meaning it comes before). Serotonin is then converted to melatonin.



ALMONDS, WALNUTS, CASHEWS, & PISTACHIOS

Magnesium is important because it is required to make melatonin in the body. Magnesium has shown to promote sleep onset and increase serum melatonin.

Magnesium helps maintain healthy levels of GABA, a neurotransmitter that promotes sleep.



CHAMOMILE TEA, BANANAS & OATMEAL

These foods are also helpful to get a good nights sleep. Bananas contain potassium and B6, which is needed to make melatonin. Chamomile tea contains an antioxidant that helps initiate sleep. Oatmeal is beneficial because the complex carbs slightly increase blood sugar and make you feel sleepy.