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Essential Oils and Sleep

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Introduction

The Perfect Night of Sleep

Imagine it's time for bed. The sun has gone down. The kids are in bed. All the day's work is finished. Phone calls and emails have stopped. It's time for sleep.

Wearing your favorite pajamas, you slide into a bed of fresh linens and lay your head on a cloud-soft pillow. You feel your breathing slow down as your eyes grow heavy. After closing them, it only takes a few moments before you drift off into a peaceful sleep. All the cares of your day melt away, and your mind and body rest in a state of tranquility for the whole night.

What we just described is the perfect night of sleep.

What we just described is the perfect night's sleep. Unfortunately, this level of optimal sleep can feel nearly impossible in our modern world. In this book, we'll address important topics to help you answer your biggest questions about sleep and essential oils. Questions like, "Could some of my habits be keeping me from better sleep?" Or, "Why do so many people use essential oils at bedtime?" Or, "How can I use essential oils to create a more restful environment for me and my family?"

If these questions or similar ones have ever crossed your mind (maybe they've even kept you up at night when you wish you were sleeping), this book will help answer them. By the end of it, you'll be empowered to take charge of your bedtime routine with the help of essential oils. Keep reading to find solutions to one of the most elusive yet essential parts of health: a good night's sleep.



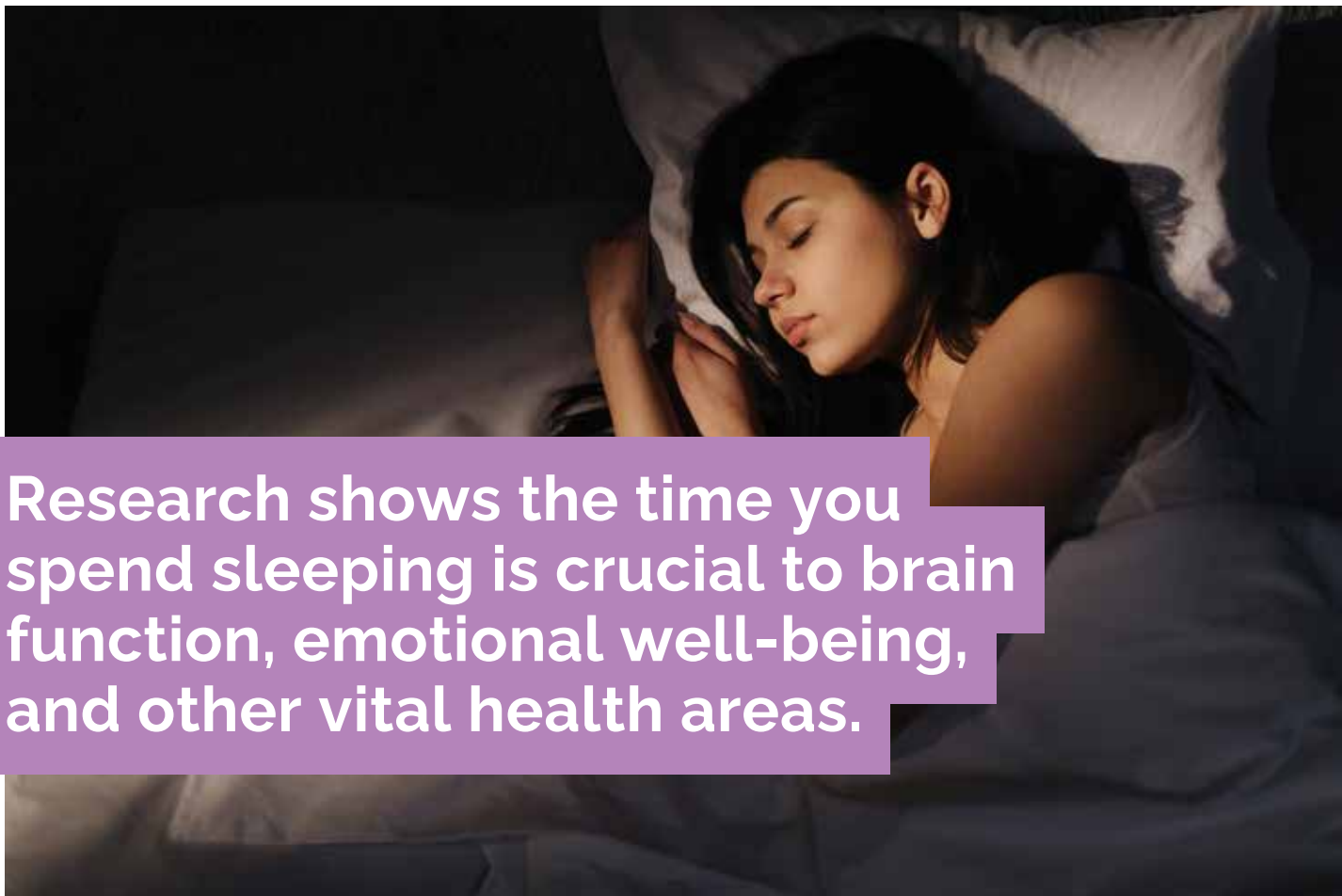
Chapter one

The Importance of Sleep

Good sleep is one of the most essential elements of a healthy life. Unfortunately, sleep is one of the most undervalued parts of modern schedules. In this busy world, it's all too easy to sacrifice sleep to other pursuits like work and family responsibilities, social time, and even technological distractions.

You might be thinking, So what if I sacrifice a little sleep to other areas of my life? I'll feel a little sluggish or groggy the next day, but there's so much to do, accomplish, and experience instead of sleep a little longer.

It may seem like a lot to spend a third of your life sleeping, but the consequences of cutting your shut-eye short are a lot more significant than just feeling tired. Sleep deprivation has been linked to several health challenges. Research shows the time you spend sleeping is crucial to brain function, emotional well-being, and other vital health areas.

A photograph of a woman with long dark hair sleeping peacefully in a bed. She is lying on her side, facing left, with her eyes closed and a serene expression. Her hands are resting near her face. The lighting is soft and warm, creating a cozy atmosphere. The background is dark, and the bed has white pillows and a patterned blanket.

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During sleep, your body is hard at work rebuilding and repairing itself. It's mending blood vessels, balancing hormones, and maintaining or even boosting the immune system. Your brain processes the events of the day and prepares itself for another day of learning.

Yes, exercising, eating right, and finding healthy ways to deal with emotions and stress are all fundamental facets of health. But sleep is essential to the effectiveness and efficiency of every one of those habits. For example, sleep is when your muscles, tendons, and other tissues recover and repair from exercise, rebuilding stronger than before.

And who hasn't been at their wits end trying to resolve an argument or complete a frustrating task or project before bed, only to find in the morning you're laughing about what you fought over the night before or are suddenly progressing much easier and faster on that task. When emotions are high or your brain is tired, it may seem like sleep is too simple to be the answer. But so often a nightly reset makes all the difference.

If you miss out on sleep, you don't give the brain ample time to refresh or clear away waste, ultimately making it more difficult to function properly the next day. Just as your mind processes information while you sleep, your body needs a break to help major systems function as they should. Sleep helps the body rest, rejuvenating cells as your muscles relax and you take slow, deep breaths.

When you cut the rest process short, your body doesn't properly recuperate, causing problems in the long run. Sleep even impacts apoptosis of cells, helping them adhere to a normal life cycle.

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Let's dive deeper into sleep and emotions for a minute. While you sleep, the brain is processing and consolidating the storage of your positive emotions from the day and dampening the storage of negative emotions.

Sleep has links to your emotional and social intelligence. For example, someone who doesn't get adequate sleep is more likely to have issues recognizing other people's emotions and expressions.

A 2022 study investigating the relationship between sleep quality, sleep duration, and emotional intelligence found people who routinely experienced higher quality and quantity of sleep tended to perceive themselves as having better emotional intelligence, such as doing well in social interactions, maintaining relationships, feeling positive, and controlling impulses. A 2015 study focused on children found their sleep patterns could directly impact behavior and academic performance.

The amount of quality sleep you get can even impact your weight. A 2018 study suggests people who regularly sleep under seven hours are more likely to have a higher body mass index (BMI) than those who sleep more!

Plus, a 2022 clinical trial found overweight adults who increased their sleep duration took in fewer calories compared with a control group. To compensate for lack of energy, sleep deprivation may make you crave foods that are higher in sugar and fat because of higher calorie content. In the study, adults increased their sleep by 1.2 hours on average and took in around 270 fewer calories than the control group.

Researchers suggested poor, insufficient sleep is associated with increased levels of the hormone ghrelin and decreased levels of the hormone leptin. Ghrelin makes you feel hungry, while leptin tells you you're full.

Basically, when your brain is tired, it tells you to feed it more—maybe because it thinks that'll help it stay awake. You literally feel hungrier and overeat because your hormones are telling you your body needs it.

Of course, there's also the simple fatigue that accompanies lack of sleep. It's extremely difficult to maintain the desire, motivation, or discipline to exercise and eat healthily when your brain and body are fatigued.



A 2017 study looking into the short- and long-term health consequences of sleep disruption found sleep is linked to several brain functions, including memory, performance, and cognition. Sleep helps your brain make new memories and recall old ones.

Sleep disruption may affect memory processing and formation. Researchers found people's performance at work, school, and other settings can be affected by sleep disruption, including their focus, emotional reactivity, decision-making, risk-taking, behavior, and judgment. In fact, deterioration in mental and physiological performance starts after only 16 hours of being awake!

By affecting stress hormones, sleep disruption may also affect cognition. Sleep even helps clear out a toxic protein from your brain called beta amyloid, which may otherwise build up and interfere with cognitive function when you're older.

Far too many people aren't thriving because of lack of sleep. Inadequate sleep over time raises your risk for health problems. It affects how well you think, react, work, learn, and get along with others. It affects your hormones and reproductive system, heart and circulatory system, metabolism, emotional response, respiratory system, and immune system. Research suggests one night of four hours of sleep results in a 70% reduction in natural killer cells—an important cell line in your immune system.

The good news is because sleep has such a broad, comprehensive impact on health, adequate rest quantity and quality will support improvement in all those areas!

The way you feel when you're awake is all about what's happening when you're not awake. During sleep, your body supports healthy brain function and maintains physical health. Sleep plays a vital role in health and well-being throughout your life, so it's worth prioritizing.



Chapter two

Sleep Needs

You now know why you need sleep, so let's talk about how much sleep you really need. Generally, the hours of sleep you need decrease with age. Sleep supports proper growth and development, so babies unsurprisingly need the most of it, followed by children and teens.

Here's a breakdown. Newborns need 14 to 17 hours of sleep. Infants from four months to a year still need 12 to 16 hours. Toddlers need 11 to 14 hours. Preschoolers need 10 to 13 hours. As you've noticed, these are ranges and have quite a bit of overlap between them.

The need for sleep only goes down slightly with each age group. If you have children, pay attention to their cues and behavior for hints on whether they're getting adequate sleep. School-age children and preadolescents need between nine and 12 hours. Teens need a solid eight to 10 hours each night.

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Now for adults, who need a minimum of seven hours of sleep each night. However, sleep needs do vary. They don't vary in that there are some people who just don't need a lot of sleep. That's a myth. No one only needs four to five hours of sleep a night.

However, sleep needs can vary in that there's a range for adults, and you may need more than seven hours a night. Some people need eight or nine hours, while others may feel completely rested with a consistent seven. Older adults who are in their sixties, seventies, and beyond will likely notice a decrease in their need for sleep. Usually just seven to eight hours a night is sufficient.

Your sleep needs will also vary based on activity levels. For example, if you're participating in vigorous exercise training, you'll likely notice an increase in your need for sleep compared to when your activity levels are more moderate. Adjust accordingly so your body can recover.

You've learned a lot about quantity here, but your quality of sleep is just as important. If you're consistently getting an adequate number of hours of sleep and still don't feeling rested or are waking frequently in the night, these may be signs of poor sleep quality.

Fortunately, you can improve sleep quality and quantity. Work schedules, day-to-day stressors, a disruptive bedroom environment, and medical conditions can all affect the quality and quantity of sleep you enjoy, but there are absolutely things you can do to help improve the sleep you're getting! More on that to come, but naturally a healthy diet and positive lifestyle habits are the foundation.

Sleep Needs



Newborns
14 to 17 hours



Infants (4 to 12 months)
12 to 16 hours



Toddlers
11 to 14 hours



Preschoolers
10 to 13 hours



**School-aged children
and preadolescents
(6 to 12 years)**
9 to 12 hours



Teens (13 to 19 years)
8 to 10 hours



Adults
7 to 9 hours



Older adults (65+ years)
7 to 8 hours

Chapter three

Stages of Sleep

You probably know there are stages of sleep. It's a complex and dynamic process! Once you fall asleep, your body follows a cycle that's divided into four stages. You repeat this sleep cycle multiple times throughout the night.

The first three stages are known as non-rapid eye movement (NREM) sleep, and the final stage is known as rapid eye movement (REM) sleep. When you fall asleep and enter NREM sleep, your blood pressure and heart rate fall. During sleep, your parasympathetic system controls your body, and your heart doesn't work as hard as it does when you're awake. During REM sleep and when rousing, your sympathetic system is activated, increasing your heart rate and blood pressure to the usual levels when you're awake and relaxed.

Stage one NREM marks the transition between wakefulness and sleep and consists of light sleep. In this twilight phase, you may be slightly aware of the room around you, but that awareness fades as you approach stage two. Muscles relax, and your heart rate, breathing, and eye movements begin slowing, as do your brain waves. Stage one typically lasts several minutes.

Next is stage two NREM, which is characterized by deeper sleep as your heart and breathing rates continue slowing and the muscles become more relaxed. Eye movements will cease, and your body temperature will decrease. Apart from some brief moments of higher frequency electrical activity, brain waves also remain slow. Stage two is typically the longest of the four sleep stages.

Stage three NREM plays an important role in making you feel refreshed and alert the next day. Your heartbeat and breathing reach their lowest levels, your muscles are as relaxed as they will be, and your brain wave activity becomes steady and sweeping, like ocean waves. Earlier in the night, this stage will be longer in duration. But its length in each sleep cycle will decrease throughout the night. This stage is what you might hear referred to as deep sleep.





Numerous studies have linked REM sleep to memory consolidation. This stage is when you convert recently learned experiences into long-term memories.

The last stage of each sleep cycle is REM. The first REM stage occurs about 90 minutes after you fall asleep. As the name suggests, your eyes will move back and forth rather quickly under your eyelids. Breathing rate, heart rate, and blood pressure begin increasing. Dreaming typically happens during REM sleep, and your arms and legs are practically paralyzed—it's believed this locking down is to prevent you from physically acting out your dreams. The duration of each REM sleep cycle increases as the night progresses.

Numerous studies have linked REM sleep to memory consolidation. This stage is when you convert recently learned experiences into long-term memories. The duration of REM sleep will decrease as you age, causing you to spend more time in the NREM stages.

These four stages will repeat cyclically throughout the night until you wake up. For most people, each cycle lasts between 90 and 120 minutes. NREM sleep constitutes about 75% to 80% of each cycle. You may also wake up briefly during the night but not remember it the next day. These episodes are known as W stages.

In the next chapter, you'll find out about another cycle related to sleep—an internal body clock that helps regulate your sleep cycle by controlling when you feel tired or alert and refreshed. This clock operates on a 24-hour basis and is known as the circadian rhythm.

Chapter four

Circadian Rhythms

Circadian rhythms are 24-hour cycles that are part of the body's internal clock, running in the background to carry out essential functions and processes. One of the most important and well-known circadian rhythms is the sleep-wake cycle.

Different bodily systems follow circadian rhythms that are synchronized with a biological clock in the brain. This internal clock is directly influenced by environmental cues—especially light—which is why circadian rhythms are tied to day and night. Circadian rhythms help make sure the body's processes are optimized at various points during a 24-hour period. The term circadian comes from the Latin phrase *circa diem*, which means “around a day.”

Circadian rhythms exist in all types of organisms. For example, they help flowers open and close at the right time and keep nocturnal animals from leaving shelter during the daytime when they'd be exposed to more predators. In people, circadian rhythms coordinate mental and physical systems throughout the body. The digestive system produces proteins to match the typical timing of meals, and the endocrine system regulates hormones to suit normal energy expenditure.



Different bodily systems follow circadian rhythms that are synchronized with a biological clock in the brain.



Your body also makes different hormones at different times of day, which may be related to your sleep pattern or circadian clocks. In the morning, your body releases hormones that promote alertness like cortisol, which helps you wake up. Other hormones have 24-hour patterns that vary throughout your life. For example, hormones in children that tell the glands to release testosterone, estrogen, and progesterone are made in pulses at night, and the pulses get stronger as puberty approaches.

The way your body handles fat also varies according to various circadian clocks, including those in the liver, fat, and muscles. For example, the circadian clocks ensure your liver is prepared to help digest fats at appropriate times. Your body may handle fat differently if you eat at unusual times.

Sleep also affects various parts of your immune system, certain parts becoming more active at different times of day. For example, when you sleep, a particular type of immune cell works harder, which means sleep is vital for a robust immune response.

When people talk about circadian rhythms, it's most often in the context of sleep. The sleep-wake cycle is one of the most clear and critical examples of the importance of circadian rhythms. When the sun rises in the morning, your

body releases the hormone cortisol to promote energy and alertness. Throughout the day, light exposure causes the internal clock to send signals that help keep you active, but you'll become increasingly tired throughout the day. These feelings peak in the evening leading up to bedtime.

As night falls, the internal clock initiates the production of melatonin, a hormone that promotes sleep, and then keeps transmitting signals that help you stay asleep through the night. Circadian rhythms align sleep and wakefulness with day and night to create a stable cycle of restorative rest, enabling increased daytime activity.

Your sleep drive—also known as sleep-wake homeostasis—may also be linked to adenosine, an organic compound produced in the brain. Adenosine levels increase throughout the day as you become more tired, and then the body breaks down the compound during sleep.

Circadian rhythms throughout the body are connected to an internal clock located in the brain, found in the suprachiasmatic nucleus or SCN, which is in the hypothalamus. At different times of the day, clock genes in the SCN send signals to regulate activity throughout the body.

The SCN is highly sensitive to light, which serves as a critical external cue influencing the signals it sends to coordinate the body's circadian rhythms. Therefore, circadian rhythms are closely connected to your sense of day and night. While other cues like exercise, social activity, and temperature can affect the internal clock, light is the most powerful influence on circadian rhythms.

If you've heard before to avoid viewing screens at night, that's why. Artificial light can confuse your circadian rhythms, which are incredibly sensitive to light and dark. Understanding how light and dark affect your circadian rhythms can help you support your sleep.

In the morning when you wake, let in the light! Expose yourself to plenty of natural sunlight, especially in the morning. As night falls, limit artificial light from screens, especially right before bed.

Chapter five

Addressing Poor Sleep

Sleeping is much more than just passing time or getting rid of bags under your eyes. As addressed before, your body goes through important processes during sleep that are necessary for growth, learning and memory, and physical and mental recuperation.

While modern science continues to reveal more on this topic, it's certainly not a new idea. In the first century CE, Roman scholar Quintilian wrote, "The interval of a single night of sleep will greatly increase the strength of the memory . . . [as] the power or recollection . . . undergoes a process of ripening and maturing."

People have known for centuries that sleep isn't a luxury—it's as important for survival as food and water. When

you wake up in the morning, how do you feel? Rested? Like you've been tossing and turning all night? Do you feel strong and invigorated and ready to start your day or weighed down by poor sleep from the night before?

Everyone enjoys the feeling of waking up rested, alert, and invigorated. Of course you'd prefer that over waking up groggy and tired. What gets in your way? It's estimated that 70% of sleeping problems are related to psycho-physiological issues, and the rest are related to either poor sleeping environment or medical issues.

Cortisol is nicknamed the stress hormone. Melatonin is another hormone your body makes, and it plays a role in sleep cycles. You may remember from earlier that cortisol is something your body makes to help you wake up and feel alert in the mornings. When your cortisol levels increase—usually from stress—that affects melatonin levels rising as they should to promote restful sleep. In other words, stress can literally affect your sleep.

This relationship goes the other way too. A lack of sleep can cause additional stress. As you can imagine, if left unchecked it could become a disruptive cycle. But that also means you can start a virtuous cycle for stress management by prioritizing sleep. That in turn will help make it easier to get the sleep you need, which will continue to help you deal with life's stressors, and so on.





Drinking caffeine during the day or using the incorrect mattress or pillow, _____ can contribute to poor sleeping at night.

For some people, interruptions like a crying newborn or a difficult toddler can make it hard to sleep through the night. For others, a demanding work schedule and constant notifications can pose a major obstacle. Also, hours of content to scroll through on social media and hundreds of binge-worthy TV shows can take the place of sleeping for those who find themselves distracted by readily available technology. Even small things you might not think about, like drinking caffeine during the day or using the incorrect mattress or pillow, can contribute to poor sleeping at night.

Certain life events and changes like a nursing infant may temporarily disrupt sleep, but you know they won't last forever. Other things—like work, school, or technology that interferes with proper sleep—can too easily become habits, leading to a lifestyle where insufficient sleep is the norm.

If you're concerned about poor sleep in your life, start by improving your sleep hygiene. That's the first step. The next chapter will be all about sleep hygiene, so stay tuned. It may take a little time, consistency, and practice, but you'll notice your sleep improving and soon enjoy the vast and diverse health benefits of more restful sleep.

If you think there may be an underlying medical condition affecting your sleep, the first step is still to work on your sleep hygiene so you can rule out at least some lifestyle factors. That way when you bring your concerns to a medical professional, you can explain what you've already implemented for healthy sleep habits and clearly explain what problems you're still facing with getting restful sleep. It's also a good idea to track your sleep in a journal or notebook so you have a physical record to show your practitioner.

Chapter six

Sleep Hygiene

You may have heard the term sleep hygiene before outside of this book. It refers to the bedroom environment and daily routines that promote consistent, uninterrupted sleep. It includes things like keeping a stable sleep schedule, making your bedroom comfortable and free of distractions, following a relaxing bedtime routine, and more.

As you go through these sleep hygiene suggestions, think about your situation and what may be useful to you. You can tailor your sleep hygiene practices to your needs. Ultimately, the goal is to make it easier to sleep soundly through the night and wake up rested.

First, let's talk about caffeine. Many adults consume it daily, relying on the energizing effects to enhance their mood and optimize their performance. Caffeine is found naturally in many plants, including coffee beans, tea leaves, cacao pods, and kola nuts. Synthetic caffeine is also added to medications and energy drinks.

While caffeine is a common tool to promote wakefulness in the morning and ward off sleepiness during the day, it comes with potential side effects, including jitteriness, headaches, and nervousness. It can also interfere with sleep, especially if consumed too late in the day.

Caffeine affects the brain by blocking adenosine receptors. As mentioned previously, adenosine is a sleep-promoting chemical that's produced in the brain during your waking hours. Normally, adenosine builds up in the brain the longer you're awake.



Since stimulants like caffeine can keep you awake and throw off the natural balance between sleep and wakefulness, consider reducing your caffeine intake, especially after noon. Everyone is different, but if you're having trouble sleeping at night, you should try avoiding caffeine later in the day.

Next is something discussed previously: seek out the sun! Exposure to natural light—especially early in the day—helps reinforce the strongest circadian cue. Then before bed, limit light as much as possible. Artificial light exposure at night can interfere with circadian rhythms, so experts advise dimming the lights and putting down electronic devices in the lead-up to bedtime.

Something else you can do during the daytime to help your nighttime is exercise. Activity during the day supports your internal clock and makes it easier to fall asleep at night. The one caveat is avoid heavy exercise too close to bedtime. Light walking or general movement before bed is fine, but a vigorous workout too late in the evening can push back when your body is ready to sleep.

Another thing to avoid right before bed are heavy meals and spicy foods. Meals that are too late, heavy, or spicy before bed can lead to heartburn or other digestive discomfort that may make it difficult to fall asleep.

Next, let's talk about naps. Naps can be a normal and healthy part of your sleep, provided they aren't too long or late in the day, which can push back your bedtime and throw your sleep off the usual schedule. Limit naps to the late morning or early afternoon and make sure to keep them short and sweet.

Follow a consistent sleep schedule. Varying your bedtime or morning wake-up time can hinder your body's ability to adjust to a stable circadian rhythm.

One study suggested inconsistent sleep—where a person goes to bed at inconsistent times or wakes up at different times every day—can disturb the regulation of a healthy inflammatory response during sleep. Don't worry, you don't need to fall asleep at the same precise time each night. Think of it more like a window of time in which you should try to fall asleep.

If you start getting ready for bed at the same time each night, you'll likely fall into a natural rhythm and go to sleep within a reasonably consistent window. If you're wondering about wake-up times and weekends, it's best to still maintain a steady window. As fun as sleeping in on the weekend can be, if your weekend wake-up time is drastically different than your weekday, it'll throw off your rhythm.

Besides, when you wake up at the same time every day, you'll find even an extra fifteen or thirty minutes on the weekend feels like a lot longer than it is!

What if you feel your sleep schedule needs a total overhaul? Make changes gradually. If you try to do it all in a day, it won't work. Move your bedtime and wake-up time a little at a time and give your body a few days to adjust to each move. With consistency, you'll settle into a schedule that reinforces and supports your natural circadian rhythm.

What about special events, travel, and other parts of life that throw off the schedule? The good news is if you keep a consistent sleep schedule, your body recovers more quickly than it does for those who don't and aren't sufficiently rested.

Starting from a place of sleep deprivation makes it harder for you to adjust and recover. If you regularly get enough sleep both in quality and quantity, your body will be able to bounce back to your usual schedule and rhythm more easily, and you can quickly catch up on any missed sleep in a natural way.

Now let's talk about your sleep environment. Your bedroom setting absolutely affects sleep quality. Consider lighting, sound, and temperature. Lower the temperature in your home so it's a little cooler at night than during the day.



If you have any little lights that twinkle or blink in your room, you might cover them with electrical tape to keep your bedroom dark. With sound, some people find quiet white noise from a fan or app helps them sleep while others don't. Figure out what works best for you.

Think about your bedding as well. You spend a third of your life sleeping, so it's worth investing in a supportive mattress that works well for your body. Comfortable, breathable sheets and bedding can also make a massive difference.

Finally, there's your bedtime routine. Washing your face and brushing your teeth are a given, but you can add other things to your nightly ritual that make it relaxing and more effective for helping you wind down.

Consider listening to soothing music, doing some light stretching, or writing in a journal. Some people like to take a warm shower or bath before bed. You might also incorporate prayer or meditation.

Reading can also make a great addition—just make sure it's not on your phone to avoid the artificial light (not to mention the notifications and distractions that inevitably pop up). A lamp with low, warm light and a physical book are best. Getting ready for sleep is also an excellent time to diffuse essential oils or massage them into your neck or feet.

Obviously, you don't need to make all these suggestions part of your personal routine—that'd take a long time to get ready for bed each night! However, you do want your bedtime routine to be long enough to truly give you time to wind down. You also want it to be consistent so your body recognizes what's happening and knows it means bedtime. The sights, sounds, smells, and rituals of your routine can help your body and brain relax.

Keep in mind, most people don't fall asleep the moment their head hits the pillow. As you lie in bed, you might find it useful to think about relaxing rather than sleeping. If sleep comes, wonderful. If not, that's okay. Get back up. Walk around for a minute, get a drink of water, or maybe read for a while. You can try to sleep again when you feel ready.

Through all this sleep hygiene training, be patient with yourself. If your sleep hygiene needs a total overhaul, pick one or two things to work on first. After a little practice, add something else. As your sleep improves and you enjoy the effects of restful sleep, it'll motivate you to keep up good habits and maintain what you've worked hard to implement!

Adenosine is lowest in the morning when you wake up and highest in the evening right before bed. The more it builds up, the sleepier you become. When caffeine blocks this process, you remain alert and vigilant. That may also be one reason why caffeine consumption can disrupt sleep.



Seek out the sun.



Follow a consistent sleep-wake schedule.



Limit stimulants like caffeine.



Avoid screens before bed.



Exercise during the day.



Limit naps.



Avoid heavy and spicy foods before bed.



Consider lighting, sound, temperature, and bedding.



Follow a relaxing evening routine.

Chapter seven

The Science behind Essential Oils, Aroma, and Atmosphere

Your sense of smell is powerful. It can help you recall memories, warn you of potential hazards, and even change the way you taste food! Because your sense of smell is so powerful, it can influence how you feel at any given moment.

You might be someone who feels at peace when at the beach inhaling the salty aroma of the ocean or when in the mountains breathing in the scent of pine trees. You've probably endured the unpleasant whiff of the kitchen garbage can that makes you feel a little queasy.

You might feel nostalgic when certain aromas remind you of past experiences. Freshly sharpened pencils might remind you of your first day of kindergarten. The smell of coconut may take you back to a Hawaiian vacation. You make positive associations with aromas you find to be pleasant or memorable, while other aromas can be repulsive or bring up unpleasant memories.

For many thousands of years, essential oils have been revered for their powerful aromas. Ancient civilizations burned incense and used plant extracts to harness the power of aroma for religious and cultural ceremonies.

More recently, essential oils have been added to cosmetic and personal care products like perfumes, soaps, and lotions to improve their aromas. Essential oils are also commonly used in spas to create a relaxing, tranquil environment for customers.

You can harness the power of any essential oil aroma to personalize your environment. Because each essential oil is derived from a different plant part, they have unique chemical profiles.

The chemical profile of an essential oil is what determines its benefits. For example, some chemical constituents give an essential oil a soothing or calming aroma, while others are cleansing, cooling, or invigorating.

For instance, the chemical makeup of Clary Sage gives it a light, floral aroma and makes it useful for creating a calming, relaxing environment. On the other hand, the chemical profile (and bright, cheery aroma) of Grapefruit makes it perfect for creating an energizing, invigorating atmosphere.

Most essential oil aromas tend to fall into one of two general categories: calming or uplifting. As you might've guessed, using essential oils with more calming aromas at bedtime can be useful for creating a relaxing atmosphere.

If we take a deeper look at how essential oils work, it's easy to see how the power of aroma can be used for a better sleeping environment. Anytime you breathe in the aroma of an essential oil, that aroma is processed in a part of the brain called the olfactory system.

When you want to use the power of aroma to help you sleep, simply establish what's called a positive association.

The olfactory system oversees your sense of smell. It's connected to another section of the brain called the limbic system—where memories live. Remember how powerful smell can be on your memory? When an aroma reaches the limbic system, the system generates a response based on memories associated with the smell.

To recap: you breathe in the essential oil, the aroma travels to the olfactory system and then to the limbic system, and your brain produces a response.

When you want to use the power of aroma to help you sleep, simply establish what's called a positive association. Say you diffuse Lavender essential oil in your bedroom as you prepare for bed. (Lavender is known for its light, calming aroma.) As you're preparing for bed, you breathe in the soothing aroma of Lavender. If all goes well, you'll create an optimal sleeping environment, which helps you get a good night of rest.

The next night, you decide to use Lavender at bedtime again and do so for a few nights in a row. Eventually when you breathe in the aroma of Lavender essential oil, you'll

have a positive association between its scent and preparing for bed. Once this association is established, you can use Lavender as part of your regular bedtime routine to signal it's time for rest.

Some essential oils can be used internally to promote restful sleep, helping calm the nervous system and promoting relaxation before bed.* Lavender can promote peaceful sleep when used internally.* Similarly, Copaiba can be taken internally to help soothe and calm the nervous system.*

Before using an essential oil internally for any reason, carefully read packaging instructions to ensure it's been approved for safe internal use.

Everyone has different sleep patterns, preferences, and needs. Each person will react a little differently to an essential oil. This individuality is what makes essential oils such useful tools for promoting a restful environment. Find an essential oil (or combination) that meets your sleeping needs. If you find one essential oil doesn't promote the quality relaxing environment you want, try another!



*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. This product is not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease.

Chapter eight

dōTERRA Serenity Restful Blend

Many essential oils can promote a relaxing, calming environment that's conducive to sleep. Soft, floral aromas like Lavender and Roman Chamomile and grounding, centering scents like Cedarwood and Sandalwood are the most helpful.

Even better than any single essential oil, dōTERRA offers a combination of pure essential oils called dōTERRA Serenity Restful Blend. It beautifully combines Lavender, Cedarwood, Coriander, Ylang Ylang, Marjoram, Roman Chamomile, Vetiver, and Sandalwood essential oils with Tonka Bean and Vanilla Absolute.

Its soothing aroma creates a powerful, effective aromatic experience, promoting a calm and tranquil atmosphere—perfect for evening routines.

dōTERRA Serenity can be used both topically and aromatically. As the sun sets or during your bedtime prep, diffuse a few drops for a relaxing aroma. You can also put a drop in your palm, rubbing your hands together and inhaling the sweet scent in a few slow, steady breaths just before your head hits the pillow or right as you start your evening routine.

dōTERRA Serenity can also help with midnight wakeups. Whether it's you or a child, a few deep breaths of the subtle, quieting scent of dōTERRA Serenity can help you or your child reset and prepare to drift back to sleep.

You might add a few drops of dōTERRA Serenity to enhance evening baths. We recommend mixing a

few drops with Epsom salts to cultivate the best experience possible.

You can also massage dōTERRA Serenity into your neck, shoulders, and feet before bed. Use this method to establish a calming bedtime routine with restless children. Converse quietly about the day as you gently rub dōTERRA Serenity into each little foot.

While dōTERRA Serenity can be applied without dilution, children have more sensitive skin than adults. Reduce how much you use and be sure to dilute it with a carrier oil like Fractionated Coconut Oil just to be safe.

As you start using the Restful Blend, you may come up with other uses that work well for you. Tonight, enjoy the serene atmosphere you create in your home with dōTERRA Serenity.



Chapter nine

dōTERRA Serenity Restful Complex Softgels

dōTERRA Serenity Restful Complex Softgels serve as a natural solution for occasional sleeplessness when taken internally.* While dōTERRA Serenity isn't designed for internal use, these softgels contain an adapted version of the essential oil blend.

Lavender essential oil is known for its ability to relax and calm the mind when taken internally.* Clinical and experimental research suggests ingesting Lavender essential oil can promote healthy relaxation and sleep.*

The softgels also contain lemon balm, passionflower, chamomile, L-Theanine, and tart cherry. All these

ingredients work together to create a natural formula that can encourage restful sleep without leaving you feeling groggy the next day.*

While all ingredients in the softgels play a special role in their calming, relaxing effects, let's look at two in particular: L-Theanine and tart cherry extract.*

L-Theanine is a non-protein amino acid found naturally in green tea, black tea, and some mushrooms. It promotes relaxation without causing drowsiness.* L-Theanine been studied for its calming effects on the nervous system.* It's structurally similar to the neurotransmitters glutamate and gamma-aminobutyric acid (nicknamed GABA), both of which are associated with improved mood, calmness, and relaxation.*

Tart cherry extract has a positive effect on sleep, which is likely because of its tryptophan content.* Tryptophan helps the body make melatonin, a natural hormone your body produces to synchronize your sleep-wake cycle with day and night. Thus, melatonin is often referred to as the sleep hormone. Its production increases with evening darkness, promoting healthy sleep. Light causes the production to stop.

Every 100 grams of tart cherry extract contains about nine milligrams of tryptophan. Plus, tart cherries also contain natural melatonin. The tart cherry extract in these softgels is a simple, natural way to gently aid your body's melatonin production and provide additional melatonin, ultimately supporting your sleep.*



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Chapter ten

dōTERRA Serenity Stick + Valerian

The dōTERRA Serenity Stick + Valerian serves as a convenient way to apply dōTERRA Serenity Restful Blend topically, leaving your skin feeling soft and non-greasy with its moisturizing emollients.

It combines the benefits of dōTERRA Serenity Restful Blend with Valerian, an herb that's native to Asia and Europe but also found in North America. Valerian root contains multiple compounds that are known for creating a relaxing environment.

Valerian supports and enhances the effects of this stick and the essential oil blend, making the overall results of dōTERRA Serenity Restful Blend even more powerful and soothing.



Chapter eleven

dōTERRA Serenity Three-Step Sleep System

You've learned about dōTERRA Serenity Restful Blend, dōTERRA Serenity Restful Complex Softgels, and the dōTERRA Serenity Stick + Valerian.

Each can be a powerful tool on its own, but they're most powerful and effective when used together. When paired with smart sleep hygiene habits, the dōTERRA Serenity Sleep System can help you get the rest you deserve.

The first step is diffusing or applying dōTERRA Serenity Restful Blend. The second is applying the dōTERRA

Serenity Stick + Valerian. And the third is taking dōTERRA Serenity Softgels.

There's more than one way to implement these steps, but here's an example. About 30 minutes before bed, take a softgel and diffuse the essential oil blend. Start your bedtime routine, enjoying the aroma of dōTERRA Serenity as you wind down.

As you climb into bed, apply the stick, rubbing it into your neck, shoulders, and wrists. Finish by deeply inhaling, basking in the calming, grounding scent. Then simply close your eyes and drift off for a night of deep, rejuvenating sleep.

Another example would be to diffuse dōTERRA Serenity throughout the evening. As it gets closer to bedtime, put a drop in the palms of your hands, rub your hands together, cup them over your mouth and nose, and take a few deep breaths, pausing to reset and enter the right state of mind for your winddown.

Proceed to your bedtime routine. Finish it by applying the stick to the bottoms of your feet and back of your neck. Swallow a softgel as you settle into bed for a restful night.

You can try one of these examples or customize the three-step system. It's ultimately as simple as one, two, three: diffuse dōTERRA Serenity Restful Blend, apply the dōTERRA Serenity Stick + Valerian, and take dōTERRA Serenity Restful Complex Softgels.

That's it. Try the system and see how your life transforms.



Chapter twelve

Additional Essential Oils for Bedtime

Learning about the specific benefits of different essential oils will help you narrow your search for what you'll want to use at bedtime. Choose ones that are calm, tranquil, and relaxing to help you promote an ideal restful environment. Dozens of essential oils have aromas that help create a restful atmosphere. Simply find the ones you like and incorporate them into your personal bedtime routine.

Let's talk about some of the best essential oils for creating an optimal sleeping environment:



Bergamot: Bergamot provides a soothing aroma that's ideal for bedtime. Interestingly, Bergamot is simultaneously calming and uplifting, making it effective for creating a peaceful atmosphere at the end of the day.



Cedarwood: Warm, woody Cedarwood can contribute to a calming environment when you want to unwind before bed. Give any essential oil blend a grounded scent adding a few drops of Cedarwood.



Copaiba: The earthy aroma of Copaiba can create a peaceful environment. It also soothes the nervous system when taken internally, which can promote a sense of calm during bedtime routines.*



Clary Sage: The relaxing, balancing scent of Clary Sage creates a restful environment, helping you prepare for bed. The clary sage flower has a pleasant herbal and slightly floral aroma. It's been used for its beneficial effects since the Middle Ages.



Frankincense: The aroma of Frankincense can promote a calm, balanced atmosphere. It's frequently used for yoga and meditation practices and can be a perfect addition to a nighttime diffuser blend.



Lavender: Lavender is renowned throughout the world for its gentle, soothing aroma. Its light, floral scent makes it a go-to for creating a relaxing environment. Lavender can also be taken internally to support restful sleep.*

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Melissa: Many people find the fresh, herbaceous aroma of Melissa to be calming and soothing. When used at nighttime, Melissa can encourage a relaxing atmosphere.*



Petitgrain: The fresh, clean aroma of Petitgrain can cultivate a tranquil environment. Like Lavender, Petitgrain can be taken internally to help calm the nervous system and promote restful sleep.*



Roman Chamomile: Known for its soothing aroma, Roman Chamomile can help you unwind at bedtime. Its sweet, daisy-like scent blends well with other soothing scents like Bergamot, Lavender, and Vetiver.



Sandalwood: Used since ancient times for meditation practices, the grounding aroma of Sandalwood can improve your bedtime routine, helping turn any room into a relaxing oasis.



Vetiver: Vetiver is reliable for creating a grounded, soothing atmosphere. Its distinct, earthy aroma blends well with lighter floral oils like Lavender and can help create the perfect bedtime ambiance.



Ylang Ylang: The rich, floral aroma of Ylang Ylang creates a positive, soothing, and relaxed environment, which makes it an obvious choice for bedtime routines.

Remember, two people can react differently to a single essential oil. Your spouse might love the aroma of Cedarwood, but you might prefer something lighter, like Lavender or Clary Sage. Your friend might rave about using Vetiver in her nighttime routine, but maybe you find it doesn't do much for you.

You may have to try a few essential oils to find the ones that work best for you. And don't forget, you can always combine several together to help produce the desired outcome.

Once you've found an essential oil (or several) that you like, it's time to create your ultimate sleeping environment. Let's talk about the best ways you can use essential oils for a better nighttime routine.

Diffusing essential oils is one of the simplest ways to take advantage of and enjoy their aromatic benefits, particularly at bedtime. Placing a diffuser near your bed allows you to easily experience the calming, relaxing aromas of essential oils as you create the perfect nighttime environment.

When you're ready for bed, add a few drops of an essential oil with a calming aroma—like Ylang Ylang or Roman Chamomile—to your diffuser. Place your diffuser anywhere in the bedroom.

When you turn the diffuser on, the calming scent of the essential oil you've chosen will fill the room and create a soothing experience. If it takes you awhile to fall asleep, start your diffuser earlier—perhaps as you're getting ready for bed—to help create the right relaxing environment and signal your brain.

If you want a relaxing essential oil experience for your entire body, try adding essential oils to a warm bath to create a comforting atmosphere before bed. Not only will a warm bath soothe the body after a long day, but essential oils will provide a luxurious aromatic experience. Just place a few drops of in a prepared bath—possibly combined with Epsom salts—and soak away the day.

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If you don't have a bathtub or enough time to soak, consider a foot soak with essential oils. All you need to do is partially fill a tub or basin with warm water, add a few drops of essential oils, and let your feet soak for 15 minutes at the end of a taxing day.

If you prefer taking a shower before bed instead of a bath, you can still incorporate essential oils into your routine. Simply place a few drops of a calming essential oil on the floor of your shower, allowing its aroma to disperse throughout the room. Make sure to place the drops away from the water stream so they don't wash down the drain right away.

Another simple way to enjoy the aroma of essential oils and promote a quality nighttime environment is by applying them to pillows and bedding. It's that easy!

Combine a few drops of essential oil with a few ounces of water in a spray bottle and then spritz the combination over your bedding before going to bed. As you lie down, you'll be surrounded by the relaxing, comforting aroma of your favorite bedtime essential oils.

Here are a few combinations you can try:

- **Lavender and Cedarwood**
- **Vetiver and Bergamot**
- **Ylang Ylang and Sandalwood**

You can also add soothing essential oils to your laundry the next time you wash your sheets, pillowcases, and bedding. Place a few drops on a dryer sheet and throw it in the dryer with your bedding. You can also add essential oils to dryer balls to help infuse a calming aroma.

For an easy yet effective way to create a restful environment, simply apply an essential oil with a relaxing aroma to the bottoms of your feet. Because this application subdues the aroma, it's a perfect way to help children enjoy restful essential oils without overwhelming their senses.

Remember, some essential oils need to be diluted before topical application. When applying essential oils on children, use less than you would for an adult and always dilute. Consider diluting and applying Lavender or Bergamot on the bottoms of your children's feet before story time or after brushing their teeth.

Conclusion

Get Better Sleep to Change Your Life

We've taken an up-close look at what a good night's sleep really does: giving you more energy during the day, assisting your brain and body through important processes, and helping you avoid more serious health concerns in the long run. A lack of quality sleep does more than just leave you feeling tired. Insufficient sleep can lead to difficulty concentrating, make it harder to lose or maintain weight, and weaken the immune system.

If you struggle with getting consistent, quality rest, imagine what your life would be like if you woke up feeling refreshed every day. Imagine what your day would be like if you didn't constantly feel drained from a night of tossing and turning.

How much would your workday improve if you weren't almost falling asleep at your desk? How much better would your home life be if you felt less cranky and could truly be present with your family? How would your body feel if you didn't have to rely on caffeine or other stimulants to keep you awake during the day?

Changing your sleeping habits does so much more than making you comfortable at night. It can change nearly every significant part of your day.

Instead of lying awake at night counting sheep, take control of your sleeping habits and discover what can happen when sleep stops feeling like a luxury and more like a necessity. Whether you need a better pillow, less screen time, an internal clock reset, or just a better bedtime environment, you can do a lot to improve chances of sleeping through the night.

And when you combine healthy sleeping habits with the power of the dōTERRA Serenity® Sleep System, you create the ultimate relaxing atmosphere. Rather than spending another day (or sleepless night) wishing you felt rested and whole or had energy, take charge of your sleep habits right away and see how doing so can change your life.

