
Top Sleep and Anxiety Strategies

Revelation Health, LLC.

Sleep and anxiety problems are among the most prevalent symptoms I hear from people who are not sure what is wrong but simply don't feel well. If fatigue and brain fog are first and second on the list, sleep and anxiety are not far behind. I think the big difference, however, is sleep and anxiety are two of the most medicated symptoms, and thus pose an even greater threat to health and healing. There are safer alternatives, and I will suggest some of the tricks that worked for me, but the key is getting upstream to the real cause. Ultimately, neurotoxic illness is often at the root. Using safe alternatives that actually work, while addressing the cause, kept me sane while I used True Cellular Detox™ to support my bodies natural process of brain neurotoxins removal.

Not only are these symptoms over-medicated, the meds are some of the most dangerous on the market. I must say there is a time and a place to take a medication, especially in an emergency. There is even a time to take medicine to reduce a symptom, because the stress of the symptom may be greater than the side effect from the medication. However, this is not true healing, which can only happen when you remove the cause of what is interfering with the body's ability to heal itself. Medications prescribed for sleep and anxiety have many adverse reactions and warning labels for a reason: they alter brain chemicals and function. They create dependency and are very difficult to stop once started. Most of these prescribed drugs affect the same receptors in the brain that addictive street drugs target, and some are actually more addictive.

With that said, I'm by no means recommending anyone stops taking a prescription drug, especially without working with the doctor who prescribed it. I do, however, recommend educating yourself on the dangers of these drugs, which are often overlooked when spoken in the background of commercials showcasing beautiful, happy people having a wonderful day. The bottom line: you must get to the cause of why you're suffering from anxiety and can't sleep.

The Perfect Storm to Anxiety

I can assure you that the cause of anxiety is not merely stress at work or home. It's not that simple. Emotional stress can be a part of what I call the "perfect storm." But without two other stressors, such as heavy metal toxicity, infections, or mold exposures, the emotional stress in and of itself is not enough. We all have emotional stressors, but when our "buckets" are full and overflowing with other chronic chemical stressors, we fail to adapt and that is when the bottom falls out.

Mild anxiety and not getting a good night's sleep are the first signs your bucket is full. They were my warning signs before my bucket started spilling over, which led to digestive problems, food allergies, abrupt mood changes, debilitating fatigue, massive brain fog, panic attacks, and a host of other bizarre symptoms that were forever changing with no rhyme or reason. Life as I knew it came to a screeching halt. Not fun. If only I knew then what I know now. It took me some years to find out the root cause of my varied symptoms, but when I did and started removing it, I slowly got my life back (read my story in R1 article).

The nights were the worst. I feared not sleeping, and often would wake up with debilitating anxiety and a feeling of dread. Besides giving into meds, which ran contrary to my deep-rooted philosophy as a chiropractor and how I was raised, I tried it all. I don't judge anyone for taking medication for these symptoms, because without sleep and the constant torture of anxiety, life can be too much to handle. Without sleep, everything else seems to get worse, but the meds end up being fuel to the fire after taking them for a period of time.

Adrenals and Thyroid Are too Far Downstream

Like many of you, I worked downstream with many of the “natural solutions” as well. I knew my thyroid was not right because my body temperature was always low. I could not adapt to hot or cold without symptoms. My hair was falling out and my cellular energy was terrible, which are classic thyroid problems. My adrenals were no doubt exhausted, because I was not adapting to even normal stress. I couldn’t even adapt to the stress of exercise. I would be wiped out after a workout, and my sleep those nights was worse. Even loud noise was too much to handle.

The problem was, when I tried to support my adrenals or thyroid, some symptoms would improve, like my energy, but sleep and anxiety would get worse. Challenges with both of these glands are always downstream, or secondary, to the true cause upstream. In this case, a neurotoxin. For me and so many others, the pituitary gland, which is located in the center of the brain and controls the thyroid and the adrenals, is the main problem. According to studies, toxins like heavy metals bio-accumulate (stockpile) in the pituitary, and consequently the control tower of our hormone system is not able to receive or send the correct messages to the rest of the body. These downstream hormonal glands, like the thyroid and adrenals, need support while you are working upstream on removing the cause. But the dance is very difficult. I will give you a trick that I learned in my battle that helped me sleep better and took the edge off my anxiety. This was the only thing that worked for me, but it’s important to know that it is always different for everyone, and it is best to work with a practitioner who understands this complicated hormonal axis. It is even more important to work with one who knows how to do True Cellular Detox™ of the brain, getting upstream to the real cause of illness. (Read the When Detox is Dangerous Series: part 1 and part 2)

My Trick For Better Days and Nights

Because the adrenals and thyroid are downstream from the control tower (pituitary), when you support one of these glands the feedback can cause a hormonal disaster. This is why my energy would get better, but my anxiety and sleep would get worse.

After many nights of horrible sleep and continued toxic stress from the mercury in my brain, my adrenals would become even more exhausted. I would be wiped out during the day, but at 3-4 o’clock in the morning they would come firing back with a cortisol, or worse yet adrenalin, release. This surge would wake me up for the rest of the night. If it was an adrenalin release, then not only would I not sleep, I would have debilitating anxiety and feelings of dread.

This happens because the body is simply trying to protect itself. When the adrenals get burned out to that degree, nighttime blood sugar levels can drop dangerously low, which can damage the brain. To compensate and raise the blood sugar to save your brain, the adrenals will fight back with an adrenalin or cortisol release. The good news? You don’t damage your brain from the lack of glucose. The bad news? You do not sleep either. This is a nasty, self-perpetuating cycle. The more the adrenals fight back to save your brain, the more burned out they get and the worse you feel. Just writing these words is starting to make me anxious, because it anchors me back to the worst times of my illness.

The other side of this crazy hormonal cycle is that, during the day, the adrenals will start to fight back to give your brain the energy it needs to function, but this in turn creates daytime anxiety. Most often the body will go back and forth between these two day and night scenarios.

Herein lies the problem. How you support your adrenals differs depending on which cycle you are experiencing: the nighttime cortisol and adrenaline releases or the daytime over-stimulation phase. Before I tell you how to know the best way to support your adrenals, I must make a note: I became addicted to this method because it became a way of predicting whether or not I was going to sleep. My wife hid my blood pressure cuff so I was unable to forecast my potential gloom and doom. I

would always find it somehow :) Remember, this is only a way to help with these maddening symptoms and make life more manageable while you work upstream to removing the real cause (ie. heavy metals, biotoxins from mold or lyme etc.).

The How-To

The tool that provides information to allow you to best address this hormonal cycle involves taking your orthostatic blood pressure. It works like this: lie down for five minutes and then take your blood pressure (BP). Waiting 5 minutes allows for a more accurate reading. Record or remember the systolic number, which is the top and larger number. For example, the 120 of a BP of 120/80. The use of a simple electronic BP device you can buy at most pharmacies is the easiest, and costs between \$30-50 dollars.

After taking your BP lying down, push the air out of the cuff and stand up as fast as you can while pumping up the cuff again to get a second reading while standing. Once again, record or remember the top systolic number and compare it to the one taken while lying down. A normal reading is when the systolic BP rises between 10-15 points. For example, if you were 120 lying down it should rise to 130 once you've stood.

If your systolic number only raises 5 points, or shows no rise at all, this is a sign of adrenal exhaustion. If the number drops, say from 120 to 115 points or more, this is a sign of more severe exhaustion. If the number rises more than 15 points, for example from 120 to 140 or even 160 or more, this indicates the adrenal, hypothalamus, pituitary axis is overcompensating and trying to fight back from the stressors. During this phase, anxiety and sleep are the worst. Most of the time you can't even get to sleep.

How it Helps You Sleep and Decrease Anxiety

As noted, this method is not perfect, but remains the most accurate way to avoid making yourself worse by working against this very complicated feedback system (hypothalamic, adrenal, pituitary axis). If you are on the lower end (exhaustion phase), you need to prevent the adrenal axis from firing back in the middle of the night. When it's exhausted, typically blood sugar will drop in the middle of the night causing the adrenals to save your brain by pumping out cortisol or adrenalin. This obviously wakes you up, but also causes more adrenal exhaustion.

The key is to take products that support and strengthen the adrenals during the day, and at night take products that help protect the adrenals by controlling cortisol and adrenalin surges. During the day I would use Ga Adrenal from Systemic Formulas or Adrenal Complex from Designs for Health. At night, I would use a product called Seriphos from Interplexus, or our new product called CALM from Systemic Formulas. I would take two CALM before bed away from food, and two if I woke up take 2 more.

Eating a little protein and fat before bed helps as well, like whey protein or an egg if you are dairy sensitive, but only a small amount of food is needed. If I was very stimulated and could not fall back to sleep despite all of this, it would help me to eat some more protein than as well.

If you are in the higher end (overstimulated phase), you need to support the hypothalamic, adrenal, pituitary axis by taking the products like Seriphos or CALM, during the day and at night. During this phase, supporting the adrenals with things that build them, like the Ga or Adrenal Complex, causes more anxiety and worse sleep. Therefore stay away from those products, and move to calming the axis, which supports the adrenals by resting and protecting them.

I would need to take two pills several times throughout the day and at night. Some days, I would end up taking between

8-12 pills just to calm the anxiety. In this phase, I would often not be able to get to sleep, and if I did get to sleep using all of my combinations of sleep products (I will share below), I would typically wake up with the worst feeling of anxiety and dread. During these times I would need more of the calming products to not feel out of my mind.

My Combo to Get to Sleep

To just get to sleep most nights I tried many things, but this is the combo that worked the best for me:

Start by taking 3mg of melatonin with 100mg of 5-HTP or 500mg of L-Tryptophan 30 minutes before bed. If this does not help, start first by increasing the 5-HTP or the L-Tryptophan. The 5-HTP can be increased by 100 mg at a time up to 300 mg. The L-Tryptophan can go up 500 mg at a time to 2000 mg. If that still is not helping, then raise the melatonin 3 mg at a time up to 9 mg. The body adapts, so I would also rotate in an herbal product from Systemic Formulas called DReM and use 2-3 capsules, 30 minutes before bed.

For my last trick, I would take a product called BIND before bed to prevent the neurotoxic release that occurs in the middle of the night. This release, just like the blood sugar drops, can also wake you up from toxic stimulation. Make sure you always take the BIND 30 minutes after the sleep support.

I hope these ideas help, but remember I never got my nights back or my anxiety to completely dissipate until I got rid of my cause (mercury poisoning). After 6 months into the brain phase of my detox, I started to get more and more good days and nights without any of the tricks. I eventually gave up my BP cuff, and didn't fear the thought of going to bed. When I finally got my nights back, I knew life would be okay.

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