

The Top 13 Foods That Disrupt Your Sleep

I have to confess. You know how I say that cheese isn't so great for hormone imbalance and aging well?

Well, last night rather late, we had a little bite to eat with my Dad while he's here visiting. And we pulled out some special cheese that's my husband's favorite, Humboldt Fog Goat Cheese. I felt rather silly – I didn't even know we had it! (That's what happens when your husband takes over the grocery shopping.)



And, darn if we didn't eat it all. Of course. It's so addictive.

Our piece was the size of the slice there in the photo, not the big wedge. We enjoyed every bite because it's so delicious. But this morning my husband, Eric, wasn't such a happy camper because he didn't sleep well at all last night.

He tossed and turned and finally got up to read for a couple of hours. Very unlike him because usually nothing keeps him awake. (Thank goodness I wasn't the one who bought the cheese.)

Many foods can disrupt your sleep, making you feel 10 years older over night.

And it's not only the obvious ones like those that contain caffeine. There are many others.

Many foods contain a substance called "tyramine", a biogenic amine from the amino acid l-tyrosine, that can increase a brain stimulant called norepinephrine.

It can increase your blood pressure, mental alertness and heart rate which is not great when you're trying to wind down to sleep.

Tyramine foods can also trigger migraines. And if you already have high blood pressure, limiting these foods may really help.



Tyramine Foods (Lila Volkas)

Here's a quick list of foods to avoid at dinner time, and at least five to seven hours before bed:

1. Aged foods like aged cheeses and cured meats (think bacon and deli meats),
2. Alcohol: tap beer, Korean Beer, Vermouth
3. Smoked fish
4. Soy sauce, miso
5. Chocolate
6. Eggplant
7. Sauerkraut/Kim Chee
8. Fava and Broad Beans
9. Tomatoes, potatoes and raspberries – maybe – see how you feel
10. Overripe and dried fruits
11. Yeast extracts and homemade breads made with yeast

Wine contains tyramines but not all have higher levels. Some may affect you and some may not. Beer as well, but we know beer contains wheat so we avoid that anyway.

If you are prone to insomnia – trouble falling asleep or staying asleep – see if you feel better once you limit the above foods after lunch time.

The other three “foods” that are BIG sleep disruptors are... drum roll please...

1. Caffeine: coffee, Yerba Mate, black tea, even green tea for some, white tea, etc.
2. Sugar
3. Alcohol

Caffeine imbalances your stress hormones, and if you have a busy day, you will have a busy night. Our trouble with sleep is due to an imbalance in circadian rhythm, due to an up-regulated nervous system so balance is key.

Many of us are slow caffeine metabolizers as well, and this can affect your ability to fall asleep and stay asleep.

The half life of caffeine is five hours for fast metabolizers, so for slow metabolizers it's even longer. An am cup of coffee affect a slow caffeine metabolizer for up to 24 hours, never mind the stress it puts on your nervous systems. If you've done your genetic profile, it's the CYP1A2 gene that will give you a clue.

Sugar imbalances blood sugar and increases inflammation. This causes stress on the body that will affect sleep in a big way.

And Alcohol, while it can be sedating, can **completely shut down your metabolism**, and will wake you during the night. Alcohol blocks REM sleep, blocking your ability to learn new information, and causing a disruption in mental health.

Sleep is essential for balancing hormones and feeling fabulous. Let me know what you notice around your sleep when you change up your diet a bit.

NEXT STEP...

Learn more about sleep and hormones here in the Sleep Training: [Sleep Your Way to Hormone Balance](#)

