Acu News

"Don't curse the darkness, light a candle" - Chinese Proverb

Creating Better Sleep Habbits

Roughly half of all adults have experienced insomnia at some point or another. There are many treatment options for insomnia ranging from meditation to medications. Acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (or TCM) continue to come out on top of the list of suggested treatments for sleepless nights and improper circadian rhythms. The reason TCM is so effective has a lot to do with the adaptability of treatment modalities. TCM does not only suggest herbs and acupuncture, or massage and physical exercise, but also lifestyle changes to introduce healthy habits. Here are among some of our favorite lifestyle adaptations you can consider if you or someone you love is struggling with insomnia.

Spend time outside: Camping has been shown to help reset the sleep cycle of insomniacs. Your body will be able to reset itself after a couple of days, allowing your circadian rhythm to get you back into a proper sleeping pattern. This theory goes hand in hand with some of TCM's primary principles; staying in tune with nature. Ask me for some of my favorite wintertime outdoor activities.

Digital detox: The digital stimulation we experience these days is overwhelming, though often necessary. With the "go-go-go" attitude of mainstream culture, sometimes digital stumilation alone can make it hard to slow down enough to find rest. Turn off the devises at lease 2 hours before bed. Better yet, create a digital detox day of the week. One day where you and your family unplug and allow yourself to reacclimate to the natural world.

Plan for sleep: Seting a bedtime, and sticking with it, can help reset your sleep cycle. Implement a routine and do the same things nightly before going to bed. If you are struggling to fall asleep on time, consider a wind down routine. Create a routine for yourself that may include a cup of tea, a yoga or tai chi session, reading or writing, experiment with what feels best for your mind and body.

Change the lighting: We are all sensitive to light. Before the regular use of artificial lighting, humans spent their evenings in a slow transition to nighttime darkness. In the evening create a darker environment in your home to help your brain ease out of the daytime stimulation and start slowing down. Alternatively, when you wake up in the morning, be sure to open the shades and turn the lights on again to help tell the brain to wake up and get going. Consistency is essential and will help train your brain and balance your circadian rhythm.

Daytime activity: Studies show that people who exercise regularly tend to sleep better and feel less drowsy in the morning. Make sure to do the appropriate types of exercise at the right time of day. Save intense exercise classes for mornings and do something more relaxing before going to bed.

Late night binges: Stop ingesting caffeine, alcohol, and nicotine and go easy on the late-night snacks. Eating too late is common and can cause indigestion and restless nights. If you're still hungry right before bed, try something light and healthy, like a tablespoon of peanut butter or a handful of almonds.

Schedule your acupuncture evaluation: Acupuncture has been proven by many studies to be a safe and effective treatment for insomnia. Treatments include acupuncture, at-home acupressure routines, breathing exercises, lifestyle changes, environmental adaptations, herbal prescriptions, even nutritiaonal recommendations and so much more. Your specific symptoms and patterns of disharmony will be addressed all in an effort to find the root cause(s) of your sleeplessness.

As you can see, there are many ways to battle insomnia and balance your sleeping patterns. Find the remedies, therapies, and routines you resonate with most, and stick with them.

I'm here to help, give me a call or schedule your appointment online for more information.

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