

BALANCE MY CHOICE

# Wellness Pointers

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"TAKE REST; A FIELD THAT HAS RESTED GIVES  
A BOUNTIFUL CROP."

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EMPLOYEE WELLNESS  
Southern Adventist University

EMOTIONAL

Emotional | Environmental | Financial | Mental | Occupational | Physical | Social | Spiritual

# The Last Thought at Night

***"I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety."* (v. 8)**

For reading & meditation -- Psalm 4:1-8

*Let your last thought at night be a thought about your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

The last thoughts that lie on our minds at night are powerful and determinative, for the door into the subconscious is opening and they drop in to work good or evil. It's bad enough struggling with evil thoughts while you are awake; don't let them take control while you are asleep. Your conscious mind may be inactive while you are asleep, not so the subconscious. The last thoughts lying in your mind as you go to sleep usually become the "playthings" of the subconscious, and it works on these during the hours you are asleep.

If it is true that your mind is active while you are asleep -- and there certainly seems to be plenty of evidence to support this theory, then make your mind work in a positive and not a negative way. Satan delights in dropping an evil thought into your mind during the moments immediately prior to sleep, because he knows that it will work destructively all through the night, influencing your attitudes and most likely preventing you from enjoying a peaceful night's sleep.



Then when you wake, you find that not only do you have to face the problems of another day, but you also have to face them without having drawn fully on the resources available to you through sleep. Thus begins a recurring pattern which cannot help but drag you down. So learn to elbow out any evil thought that enters your mind just before sleep, and let your last thought be a thought of Christ.

***Father, if it is true that my mind works when I am asleep, then help me to make it work for good and not for evil. Teach me the art of holding a thought about You on my mind immediately prior to going to sleep. I shall begin tonight, Lord. Amen.***

# Signs and symptoms of sleep deprivation and lack of sleep

If you're getting less than eight hours of sleep each night, chances are you're sleep deprived. What's more, you probably have no idea just how much lack of sleep is affecting you.

How is it possible to be sleep deprived without knowing it? Most of the signs of sleep deprivation are much more subtle than falling face first into your dinner plate. Furthermore, if you've made a habit of skimping on sleep, you may not even remember what it feels like to be wide-awake, fully alert, and firing on all cylinders. It feels normal to get sleepy when you're in a boring meeting, struggle through the afternoon slump, or doze off after dinner. But the truth is that it's only "normal" if you're sleep deprived.

## **You may be sleep deprived if you...**

Need an alarm clock in order to wake up on time

Rely on the snooze button

Have a hard time getting out of bed in the morning

Feel sluggish in the afternoon

Get sleepy in meetings, lectures, or warm rooms

Get drowsy after heavy meals or when driving

Need to nap to get through the day

Fall asleep while watching TV or relaxing in the evening

Feel the need to sleep in on weekends

Fall asleep within five minutes of going to bed



While it may seem like losing sleep isn't such a big deal, sleep deprivation has a wide range of negative effects that go way beyond daytime drowsiness.



## **The effects of sleep deprivation and chronic lack of sleep**

Fatigue, lethargy, and lack of motivation

Moodiness and irritability

Reduced creativity and problem-solving skills

Inability to cope with stress

Reduced immunity; frequent colds and infections

Concentration and memory problems

Weight gain

Impaired motor skills and increased risk of accidents

Difficulty making decisions

Increased risk of diabetes, heart disease, and other health problems

## **Having a hard time getting up when your alarm goes off?**

Even if you've enjoyed a full night's sleep, getting out of bed can be difficult if your alarm goes off when you're in the middle of deep sleep (stage N3). If you want to make mornings less painful—or if you know you only have a limited time for sleep—try setting a wake-up time that's a multiple of 90 minutes, the length of the average sleep cycle. For example, if you go to bed at 10 p.m., set your alarm for 5:30 (a total of 7 ½ hours of sleep) instead of 6:00 or 6:30. You may feel more refreshed at 5:30 than with another 30 to 60 minutes of sleep because you're getting up at the end of a sleep cycle when your body and brain are already close to wakefulness.

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# Cancer Fighting Foods/Spices

The National Cancer Institute estimates that roughly one-third of all cancer deaths may be diet related. What you eat can hurt you, but it can also help you. Many of the common foods found in grocery stores or organic markets contain cancer-fighting properties, from the antioxidants that neutralize the damage caused by free radicals to the powerful phytochemicals that scientists are just beginning to explore. There isn't a single element in a particular food that does all the work: The best thing to do is eat a variety of foods.

The following foods have the ability to help stave off cancer and some can even help inhibit cancer cell growth or reduce tumor size.

**Avocados** are rich in glutathione, a powerful antioxidant that attacks free radicals in the body by blocking intestinal absorption of certain fats. They also supply even more potassium than bananas and are a strong source of beta-carotene. Scientists also believe that avocados may also be useful in treating viral hepatitis (a cause of liver cancer), as well as other sources of liver damage.

**Broccoli, cabbage, and cauliflower** have a chemical component called indole-3-carbinol that can combat breast cancer by converting a cancer-promoting estrogen into a more protective variety.

**Chili peppers and jalapenos** contain a chemical, capsaicin, which may neutralize certain cancer-causing substances (nitrosamines) and may help prevent cancers such as stomach cancer.

**Figs** apparently have a derivative of benzaldehyde. It has been reported that investigators at the Institute of Physical and Chemical Research in Tokyo say benzaldehyde is highly effective at shrinking tumors, though I haven't seen this report. In addition, the U.S. Department of Agriculture says figs, which contain vitamins A and C, and calcium, magnesium and potassium, may curtail appetite and improve weight-loss efforts. Fig juice is also a potent bacteria killer in test-tube studies.

**Grapefruits**, like oranges and other citrus fruits, contain monoterpenes, believed to help prevent cancer by sweeping carcinogens out of the body. Some studies show that grapefruit may inhibit the proliferation of breast-cancer cells in vitro. They also contain vitamin C, beta-carotene, and folic acid.

**Kale** has indoles, nitrogen compounds which may help stop the conversion of certain lesions to cancerous cells in estrogen-sensitive tissues. In addition, isothiocyanates, phytochemicals found in kale, are thought to suppress tumor growth and block cancer-causing substances from reaching their targets.

**Mushrooms** - There are a number of mushrooms that appear to help the body fight cancer and build the immune system - Shiitake, maitake, reishi, Agaricus blazei Murill, and Coriolus Versicolor. These mushrooms contain polysaccharides, especially Lentinan, powerful compounds that help in building immunity. They are a source of Beta Glucan. They also have a protein called lectin, which attacks cancerous cells and prevents them from multiplying. They also contain Thiopronine. These mushrooms can stimulate the production of interferon in the body.

Extracts from mushrooms have been successfully tested in recent years in Japan as an adjunct to chemotherapy. PSK is made from the Coriolus Versicolor. Maitake mushroom extract is PCM4.

**Oranges and lemons** contain limonene which stimulates cancer-killing immune cells (lymphocytes, e.g.) that may also break down cancer-causing substances.

**Seaweed and other sea vegetables** contain beta-carotene, protein, vitamin B12, fiber, and chlorophyll, as well as chlorophylones - important fatty acids that may help in the fight against breast cancer. Many sea vegetables also have high concentrations of the minerals potassium, calcium, magnesium, iron, and iodine.



# Improve mental and emotional health by taking care of yourself

In order to maintain and strengthen your mental and emotional health, it's important to pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Don't let stress and negative emotions build up. Try to maintain a balance between your daily responsibilities and the things you enjoy. If you take care of yourself, you'll be better prepared to deal with challenges if and when they arise.

Taking care of yourself includes pursuing activities that naturally release endorphins and contribute to feeling good. In addition to physical exercise, endorphins are also naturally released when we:

**Do things that positively impact others.** Being useful to others and being valued for what you do can help build self-esteem.

**Practice self-discipline.** Self-control naturally leads to a sense of hopefulness and can help you overcome despair, helplessness, and other negative thoughts.



## *More tips and strategies for taking care of yourself:*

**Appeal to your senses.** Stay calm and energized by appealing to the five senses: sight, sound, touch, smell, and taste. Listen to music that lifts your mood, place flowers where you will see and smell them, massage your hands and feet, or sip a warm drink.

**Engage in meaningful, creative work.** Do things that challenge your creativity and make you feel productive, whether or not you get paid for it – things like gardening, drawing, writing, playing an instrument, or building something in your workshop.

**Get a pet.** Yes, pets are a responsibility, but caring for one makes you feel needed and loved. There is no love quite as unconditional as the love a pet can give. Animals can also get you out of the house for exercise and expose you to new people and places.

Everyone is different; not all things will be equally beneficial to all people. Some people feel better relaxing and slowing down while others need more activity and more excitement or stimulation to feel better. The important thing is to find activities that you enjoy and that give you a boost.

**Learn or discover new things.** Think of it as "intellectual candy". Try taking an adult education class, join a book club, visit a museum, learn a new language, or simply travel somewhere new.

**Enjoy the beauty of nature or art.** Studies show that simply walking through a garden can lower blood pressure and reduce stress. The same goes for strolling through a park or an art gallery, hiking, admiring architecture, or sitting on a beach.

**Manage your stress levels.** Stress takes a heavy toll on mental and emotional health, so it's important to keep it under control. While not all stressors can be avoided, stress management strategies can help you bring things back into balance.

**Limit unhealthy mental habits like worrying.** Try to avoid becoming absorbed by repetitive mental habits – negative thoughts about yourself and the world that suck up time, drain your energy, and trigger feelings of anxiety, fear, and depression.

**Make leisure time a priority.** Do things for no other reason than that it feels good to do them. Go to a funny movie, take a walk on the beach, listen to music, read a good book, or talk to a friend. Doing things just because they are fun is no indulgence. Play is an emotional and mental health necessity.

**Make time for contemplation and appreciation.** Think about the things you're grateful for. Meditate, pray, enjoy the sunset, or simply take a moment to pay attention to what is good, positive, and beautiful as you go about your day.



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