

How Do Melatonin and THC Affect Sleep?

Sleep. Reading that word, some have a picture in their heads of waking up rested in a cozy bed. Others may as well have cringed. Sleep eludes them, either getting asleep or staying asleep. Their nights? Disgruntled glances at a glowing clock and bags under the eyes day after day.

Sleep deprivation leads to all sorts of problems: memory issues, heightened anxiety, worsening depression, heart disease, weakened immune system...the list goes on. While establishing good sleep habits can help, some people look for extra assistance - like melatonin or cannabis. Ideally, some combination of both.

What is melatonin?

Believe it or not, melatonin is a hormone that we *already make* in our bodies. Turns out, there's a lot of hormones out there - over 50 documented so far - and they all help regulate our systems. The one most associated with sleep? That'd be melatonin.

Since it was discovered in the late 1950s, we've had a lot of time to learn about melatonin. Essentially, its main role is to regulate our night and day cycles - our internal clock - by reacting to darkness. As it gets darker, your brain boosts production of melatonin, initiating sleep. And as it gets lighter, it does the opposite to wake you up. There's a reason that black-out curtains help a lot of people sleep!

Do you know someone who, when they have the chance, seems to automatically go to sleep after midnight and wake up at noon? Their internal clock is different, for whatever reason, often leading to lower quality sleep as they struggle to attend work or school.

"Take a few melatonin gummies," you've probably overheard someone advise. It's nearly as common as recommending ibuprofen for a headache. And, like ibuprofen, melatonin is easily found in supplement form. These supplements mimic, approximately, the natural sleep cycle and help reset that internal, biological clock - our circadian rhythm.

What are common uses of melatonin supplements?

Since the goal of taking melatonin is ultimately to make up for an off-kilter circadian rhythm, permitting the possibility of improved sleep, it's often used to ease the effects of jet lag. More commonly, melatonin is plucked off a store shelf by someone seeking a consistent difficulty with falling - or staying - asleep.

Insomnia, chronic or temporary, is a big reason people seek out relief. For others, melatonin may soften anxiety's effect on good sleep by promoting a calm, sleepy peacefulness. Also

common reasons people seek out supplements are delayed sleep disorders, where you'll meet many "night owls."

Though it is non-toxic and non-addictive, melatonin may have some side effects. Some common ones include excessive daytime drowsiness and headaches, particularly at higher doses. Melatonin supplements may also interact with other medications you're on, so we recommend talking to your doctor.

What about the impact of THC on sleep?

"Wait, weed helps sleep, too?"

For many people, absolutely. People have been consuming marijuana - increasingly referred to as cannabis - for generations. Possibly millenia, evidenced by archaeological discoveries. By the early 1900s, it was sold at apothecaries and pharmacies as an over-the-counter tincture. Knowing this, we can't say we're surprised that it's used so widely as a sleep aid.

So, *how exactly* does THC impact our sleep? Real quick: THC stands for tetrahydrocannabinol and refers to, typically, THC 9 also called Delta 9. THC 8 and THC 10, Delta 8 and Delta 10 respectively, are newcomers so let's focus on Delta 9 THC. And THC isn't the only compound found in cannabis that affects us - there are terpenes and other cannabinoids that help with sleep - like CBN.

Ok, getting back to sleep. Specific effects and the relief experienced vary not only by dosage, but by strain, product, and individual reactions. When it's a good fit for the person, THC can ease things like anxiety, chronic pain and inflammation, even nightmares related to PTSD.

There are so many personal stories about how cannabis helps with getting better sleep, but there are also some studies supporting the idea, too. One study even found that cannabis [increases the production of melatonin](#) in the body! More work needs to be done, but the idea of using marijuana as a sleep aid is not at all farfetched.

Oh, but we're not telling you to select one over the other for sleep - both cannabis and melatonin are great options.

Does combining THC and melatonin lead to better sleep?

Speaking of, what happens when you combine melatonin and cannabis to sleep better? THC, specifically? Well, there aren't many official studies that put THC and melatonin together, but it is increasingly common for people to choose both.

Is it safe to combine the two? Typically, yes. Again, other medications or conditions may impact your response to either - or both - cannabis and melatonin. Two major things to consider:

- Since cannabis increases your melatonin production, you may not want to take as high a dose of a melatonin supplement to avoid side effects like daytime drowsiness.
- One effect of melatonin is increased REM sleep. Cannabis generally reduces time in REM sleep. It's possible they balance each other out for a healthier sleep cycle, but it will depend greatly on your individual situation.

As far as effectiveness goes, finding a supplement with a combination of melatonin, THC, and another sleep aid powerhouse called cannabidiol (CBD) in the [right dose](#) is advised. You'll get the benefits of the entourage effect - all of them working together for optimal performance in your body - without juggling multiple supplements and dosages.

If poor sleep plagues you, take a peek at our [Nite Bites](#). They're a bunch of good things: vegan, gluten free, allergen free, low in sugar. Packed in each bite - which are a decadent dark chocolate, we'd like to mention - are a bunch of sleep-promoting ingredients...including a beautiful combination of THC, CBD, and melatonin. Sweet dreams!