A Good night's Sleep
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A good night's sleep is essential for optimal wellness and longevity, as this is when our body repairs, grows new tissues and allows healing and restoration to occur.

We have an internal body clock that dictates when we are tired by increasing the sleep hormone melatonin at night as it becomes dark.   This creates a circadian rhythm which when balanced helps us sleep at night and energizes us on rising.

We can encourage our body clock by making sure we have:

- Darkness at night
- Dim lights after dusk
- Morning light
- Exercise
- Whole food diet
- Managing stress

Creating a healthy bedtime routine helps regulate our circadian rhythm so we are in homeostasis with both ourselves and nature.   As we get older, melatonin decreases, which may explain why some of us have poor sleep quality.

Interestingly, melatonin is not just for sleep though also has been shown to protect our brain health, support our memory and may be a preventative for neurodegenerative diseases.   .

Therefore, preparing for bed by initiating a healthy bedtime routine will help ensure a deep and restorative sleep, healthy mind and a vibrant day.

Soft red lighting has been shown to improve sleep and is one of the best lights to be used at night to prevent the reduction of melatonin.   Switching off blue light which is emitted from mobile phones, computers and televisions at least 2 hours before bed will protect melatonin levels.

Listening to binaural beats has been shown to help lengthen stage 3 sleep critical for allowing the body to recover and grow. This is also known as delta sleep. Listening to this whilst in bed for at least 15 minutes may ensure a peaceful and restful night's sleep.

Essential oils provide a therapeutic effect connecting both mind and body with a heightened sense of well-being and calmness.   Lavender, Jasmine, ylang ylang can be either placed directly under your pillow or added to a diffuser in your bedroom to create a hub of serenity.

Supplementing with l-theanine helps produce the calming neurotransmitter GABA to take you out of fight and flight and helps induce non-REM sleep (deep sleep).   Montmorency cherry is a variety of sour cherry which has been shown to help combat insomnia, taken 1 hour before bed.   Other herbs to help induce calmness before bedtime are lemon balm, valerian, hops and chamomile.   All of these can be taken as herbal teas and supplemented in either a capsule or tincture for a therapeutic dosage before bedtime.