

HEALTH QUARTERLY 2006

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WOMEN'S HEALTH UPDATE

How To Get The Sleep You Need

Here's a fact that you may want to sleep on. According to the National Sleep Foundation, nearly 75 percent of women between the ages of 30 and 60 are not getting the eight hours of sleep they need.

Many women find it difficult to unwind at the end of the day and are left tossing and turning, trying to fall asleep and waking up in the middle of the night. Often blamed are hectic lifestyles filled with daily stress, anxiety and responsibilities, but there may be more to what's keeping women up at night.

If you're a woman between the ages of 35 and 55, you may be experiencing hormone fluctuations due to perimenopause and menopause, which can cause a number of physical and emotional changes including increased irritability, anxiety and night sweats. These changes may upset your body's natural sleep pattern. In fact, according to a recent study, sleeplessness is the number-two complaint of menopausal women.

Researchers believe that lack of quality sleep may contribute to obesity, diabetes, immune system dysfunction as well as safety issues such as car accidents and medical errors, not to mention impaired job performance and productivity in other activities.

So how do you get the sleep you need while your hormones are fluctuating? The key is to help your body find its natural sleep pattern, enabling you to drift off to sleep and wake, ideally eight hours later, feeling fully rested. There are a number of things you can do to prepare yourself for quality slumber:

▶ **Stick to a sleep schedule** — even on the weekends. Going to bed and waking up at the same time every day will enable your body to recognize its natural sleep pattern.

▶ **Create a relaxing bedtime routine** that will let your body know it's time to unwind and prepare for a full night's rest, like reading a book, taking a bath and listening to soft music.

▶ **Maintain a comfortable sleeping environment.** Avoid sharing your sleep space with kids and pets. Take steps to ensure that the room temperature, noise level and darkness will suit you throughout the night.

▶ **Don't eat or drink large amounts before bedtime**, which can make you more likely to get up in the middle of the night.

▶ **Avoid stimulants** such as nicotine and caffeine, which can keep you awake.

In addition to lifestyle changes, there are also over-the-counter sleep aids available that can help you get the sleep you need. While these products effectively put women to sleep for the night, some women dislike the morning grogginess they may cause. Others may be concerned about relying on an over-the-counter sleep aid for a good night's rest.

Perhaps the best way for perimenopausal or menopausal women to help end their sleepless nights is to address what's causing them. For those who want help sleeping without side effects, there are natural supplements that can help.

Estroven PM, the latest product from the leader in women's natural supplements, is an alternative to sleep aids. Estroven PM works in harmony with the body to help balance hormones and provide the gentle relaxation needed to fall and stay asleep each night.

It contains only natural ingredients including the herb black cohosh, which has been clinically shown to help relieve hormone-related night sweats, stress and irritability. Proprietary herbal sleep blends in the formula work quickly to help restore the body's natural sleep pattern and allow you to wake feeling refreshed and energized, not drowsy or groggy.

To learn more about Estroven PM and request a free sample, visit www.estroven.com.

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