



Live Well, Work Well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home and life—brought to you by the insurance specialists at USI Insurance Services

Besides grabbing one of these snacks, getting to sleep may be easier when your body is on a schedule.

GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP WITH FOOD

If you're like many, you have a difficult time getting the seven or eight hours of sleep that you need to be functional throughout the day. Yet, some of your favorites in the kitchen may be just the ticket to send you snoozing.

Approximately 90 minutes before you want to fall asleep, make yourself a snack of roughly 200 calories from the items listed below. These sleep-inducing foods will help your muscles relax, quiet your mind and produce sleep-inducing hormones (serotonin and melatonin) to get you right off to bed.

- **Flaxseeds.** These seeds are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which will brighten your mood if sadness or anxiety is keeping you from getting to sleep.
- **Whole-wheat bread.** Whole-wheat contains insulin, which assists tryptophan in making its way to your brain. Once there, it is converted to serotonin to send you to sleep in no time.
- **Turkey.** This meat is the best-known food source of tryptophan. If you eat a slice of turkey on whole-wheat bread, you will be off to sleep because tryptophan works best on a fairly empty stomach with a small amount of carbohydrates.
- **Bananas.** These power fruits contain serotonin and melatonin, and the muscle relaxant magnesium.
- **Chamomile tea.** This beverage has a mild sedating effect, which will calm your mind and body.
- **Warm milk.** This beverage contains tryptophan, which is sedating and calcium to help your brain use the tryptophan. Warm milk also has a calming effect and is comforting to drink.
- **Honey.** The small amount of glucose in honey communicates with your brain to turn off orexin, a neurotransmitter that contributes to alertness. Place a spoonful in a bowl of oatmeal to head off to bed quickly.
- **Potatoes.** A spud in the evening will clear away the amino acids in your body that can interfere with the powers of tryptophan.
- **Oatmeal.** Oats contain melatonin, which is great for inducing sleep.
- **Almonds.** These nuts contain a healthy dose of tryptophan and magnesium.



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