



# Melatonin

## WHAT IS IT?

Melatonin is an antioxidant hormone made in the brain in response to darkness. It regulates certain genes within every cell, making it important in cellular antioxidation, cell repair, and regulation of cell growth. Melatonin is involved in sleep, circadian rhythm, and the immune system. It is naturally present in flax, orange bell peppers, walnuts, almonds, tomatoes, goji berries, tart cherries, and raspberries.

Melatonin is suppressed by certain medications and by too much light at night. With the rise of 24-hour lights in cities and electronics in our homes, the health effects of insufficient melatonin are becoming more important.

## WHO MIGHT CONSIDER TAKING THIS?

Melatonin has been found to be beneficial for:

- Jet lag
- Insomnia (adults and children)
- Cancer survival
- Migraine and cluster headaches
- Alzheimer's / Parkinson's
- Irritable bowel syndrome
- GERD
- Crohn's and Ulcerative Colitis
- Endometriosis
- PCOS
- Infertility
- PMS / PMDD

The most common complaint is increased dream intensity or morning grogginess — both typically improved by decreasing the dose. The most common mistake is starting at too high a dose. Take melatonin at night as it can cause sleepiness.

## MEDICATION INTERACTION

Melatonin can cancel out the effect of calcium channel blockers (Nifedipine, Amlodipine). If you take melatonin and a calcium channel blocker for high blood pressure, monitor your blood pressure closely and alert your doctor if you notice elevations.

## PREPARATIONS & DOSAGE

Forms include capsules, timed-release capsules, gummies, and sublingual drops/sprays/tablets.

### Fall asleep / jet lag:

Start with 0.5-1mg immediate-release up to 30 min before bed. Try 2-3 hours before if ineffective. Doses above 5mg don't increase effectiveness.

### Stay asleep:

Timed-release (extended or sustained release) 1-3mg. Ensures melatonin release in the middle of the night to reduce awakenings.

### Cancer outcomes:

20mg (only when added to chemo or radiotherapy)

### Migraine headache:

3-8mg

### Cluster headache:

10mg

### IBS:

3mg at night, or 3mg at night and 5mg in morning

### GERD:

6mg at night

### IBD (UC and Crohn's):

5mg IR (only when added to current medications)

### Endometriosis:

10mg

### PCOS:

3-6mg

### Infertility:

3mg

### PMS / PMDD:

3mg

### Alzheimer's:

2.5-10mg

### Parkinson's:

10-20mg