The #1 Sleep Mistake Holding You Back From Restorative Sleep

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BY HEATHER HURLOCK

Welcome back to *The Mindset* **by Super Age.**

We've said it before, and we'll say it many times again: Sleep isn't just rest—it's one of the most potent longevity tools we have. Quality sleep is foundational for physical and mental performance, emotional health, memory consolidation, metabolic regulation, and cellular repair. A good sleep routine is not about perfection—it's about creating a rhythm where your body can thrive.

As we age, restorative sleep becomes harder to achieve. Stress, lifestyle shifts, and even hormonal changes work against us—And it's different for men and women. **But there's good news: You can reclaim deep, restorative sleep with a few intentional shifts**.

Today, we're diving into the science of sleep, offering insights you might not know, from how deep sleep protects against heart disease to surprising sleep disruptors like blue light, caffeine timing, and even cannabis. Plus the "Do's and Don'ts of Sleep Mastery". As always, try some of these things, and if they don't work, adjust.

Some people wind down with TV; for others, it amps them up. Same with food. Some people need a snack before bed; for others, it disrupts their sleep. We are all different. My surefire knockout formula is carb-heavy dinner, some form of light exercise such as a brisk walk or a swim, a hot bath, then reading some fiction.

Finding the sleep hygiene routine that works for you is key—because if you are not sleeping, you are sabotaging your health. Let's make quality sleep non-

negotiable—your body, mind, and future self will thank you.

Onwards and upward!

David Stewart
Founder

BODY WISDOM

Why Men and Women Sleep Differently

The #1 sleep mistake holding you back is **not adapting your sleep habits to age-related changes in hormones and sleep architecture**. A full sleep cycle typically lasts 90 minutes and repeats around 4-6 times per night, with each stage playing a unique role: light sleep primes memory consolidation and learning, deep sleep, often called the body's ultimate repair phase, drives cellular repair, immune resilience, and cardiovascular health, while REM sleep sharpens creativity, emotional balance, and metabolic regulation. Together, these phases form a powerful anti-aging system, but as we age, they can become harder to maintain, and for different reasons depending on your biological sex.

Men and Deep Sleep Challenges:

Men over 50 are more prone to obstructive sleep apnea (OSA), where breathing repeatedly stops and heartrate can drop during sleep. This condition is due to decreased muscle tone in the muscles that keep the airway open during sleep, and

declining testosterone levels. OSA fragments deep sleep, disrupting the body's repair processes and leading to fatigue, cognitive issues, and an increased risk of cardiovascular disease.

Women and REM Sleep Disruptions:

For women, hormonal fluctuations during **perimenopause** and **menopause** often impact **REM sleep**—the phase where emotional resilience and memory processing occur. Research shows that **women over 58 experience longer REM latencies** (the delay before REM sleep begins) compared to men, which can result in fragmented sleep. These hormonal changes also disrupt circadian rhythms, the body's internal clock, further impacting sleep quality.

To protect your longevity, aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night, with deep sleep making up 13-23% of total rest, translating to approximately 1–2 hours per night. Use a wearable to track your sleep phases and prioritize consistent wake times. See our Do's and Don'ts of Sleep Mastery below.

EAT WELL

Fuel Your Sleep Like a Pro

What you eat can either supercharge or sabotage your sleep. Magnesium-rich foods like spinach, pumpkin seeds, and bananas can **help relax muscles and support deep sleep**. Tryptophan, found in turkey, oats, and eggs, boosts melatonin production, while **complex carbs** like quinoa and sweet potatoes stabilize blood sugar, preventing those disruptive 3 a.m. wake-ups.

Timing matters: Aim to finish eating 2-3 hours before bed. Late-night meals can interfere with deep sleep by spiking blood sugar and interrupting digestion.

Your gut health influences sleep more than you think. A healthy gut microbiome

can support better rest. Load up on fiber-rich foods like berries, leafy greens, and whole grains, while fermented staples such as yogurt, kimchi, and sauerkraut deliver sleep-supporting probiotics.

Stick to your last caffeine intake by 2 p.m. for better deep and REM sleep cycles. Caffeine can linger in your system for up to 6-8 hours, blocking adenosine, the brain chemical that promotes sleepiness. Even a mid-afternoon coffee can disrupt deep sleep quality.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Do’s and Don’ts of Sleep Mastery

Hot Shower – Yes!

A hot shower or bath 90 minutes before bed can **help you fall asleep faster**—by up to 10 minutes, according to research in *Sleep Medicine Reviews*. The heat raises your core body temperature, and as your body cools down afterward, it signals your brain to prepare for sleep. But timing matters: bathing too close to bedtime doesn’t allow enough cooldown time, delaying sleep onset.

Cannabis – Think Twice.

When was the last time you remembered your dreams? THC, the psychoactive compound in cannabis, can reduce REM sleep—the critical phase for memory consolidation, emotional balance, and creativity. While it may help you fall asleep, it **suppresses the brain’s most restorative cycles long-term**. If you use cannabis for sleep, consider CBD instead. Early research suggests it may support sleep without impacting REM as significantly.

Blue Light – Nope.

Even dim artificial light can **suppress melatonin, your body's sleep hormone**, by up to 90 minutes, according to a study in the *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology Metabolism*. Blue wavelengths from screens and LEDs are the worst offenders. Try amber-tinted glasses or swap your evening lighting to warm, red hues to protect your natural circadian rhythm.

?Biphasic Sleep – Not really.

Once common, biphasic sleep (two shorter sleep phases) worked well in pre-industrial times and has gained popularity online **but may not be sustainable long-term**. For adults over 45, especially women experiencing hormonal changes, splitting sleep can fragment critical REM cycles. But it may work for some people. **Consistency is key**—if you experiment with biphasic sleep, keep your wake times the same each night.

Sleep Mask + Noise Cancellation – Yes!

Total darkness and silence can be game-changing. A *Critical Care* study found that **sleep masks and noise-canceling headphones reduce sleep disruptions** by enhancing melatonin production and minimizing micro-awakenings.

Morning Routine – You bet!

Forget the idea that great sleep starts with your nighttime routine—it starts the moment you wake up. **Morning light exposure resets your circadian rhythm**, signaling your brain to regulate melatonin properly. Hydrating, stretching, and getting 10-15 minutes of natural light (like a short walk or opening the blinds during breakfast) can improve sleep onset and quality later. Research even suggests that a consistent morning wake-up time can be more impactful than nighttime habits when it comes to better sleep health.

STAY AMAZED

The Sleep-Boosting Magic of Yoga Nidra

Yoga Nidra, often referred to as “yogic sleep,” is a guided meditation practice that induces deep relaxation and has been **scientifically shown to enhance sleep quality and cognitive function**. Recent studies indicate that practicing Yoga Nidra can improve deep sleep, which in turn enhances attention, learning, memory, and other cognitive tasks.

Here’s a guided **yoga Nidra practice** from mindfulness teacher Kelly Boys. This practice offers a beautiful pathway to better rest and emotional clarity.

Your Guided Yoga Nidra Practice:

1. **Settle In:** Lie flat on your back in a quiet, dimly lit space. Close your eyes, allowing your body to sink into stillness. Let your breath slow naturally.
2. **Body Scan:** Bring your awareness to different parts of your body, starting from your toes and moving upward. With each area, simply notice the sensation—warmth, tingling, or tension—without judgment.
3. **Breath Awareness:** Shift your focus to the natural rhythm of your breath. Kelly often guides you to notice the coolness of the inhale and the warmth of the exhale, encouraging deeper relaxation.
4. **Visualization:** Imagine a peaceful setting—perhaps a gentle sunrise or a calm ocean. Visualize this space with rich sensory detail, allowing calmness to deepen.
5. **Intention Setting:** Silently repeat a positive affirmation like “I am at peace,” anchoring your mind in a state of calm presence.

Feel the difference? Yoga Nidra isn’t just about relaxation—it’s a tool for profound

restoration. Try it tonight and let your body drift into healing stillness.

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WRITTEN BY:



Heather Hurlock