

Food intolerances can cause a release of histamine in the body. Histamine is an excitatory chemical that can cause increased alertness and arousal; this can therefore impact on your child's ability to relax, get to sleep and stay asleep.

Solution: SleepDrops for Kids and get your child tested for food intolerances by seeing a registered naturopath. Or you can try cutting out some of the most common foods that cause problems such as milk products, broccoli, onion, garlic, cabbage, kiwi fruit, apples, citrus fruit, tomato and pineapple but it could be anything. If you don't know which foods? Try dairy first – it is most likely this! Supplement with probiotics or digestive enzymes if necessary to improve digestion and the body's tolerance to allergens.

History of antibiotic use

If your child has been prone to infections or for whatever reason has taken antibiotics then this can also impact upon your child's ability to sleep. Antibiotics wipe out the beneficial flora in the digestive system and can cause inflammation and irritation in your child's intestinal lining.

So what does this have to do with sleep?

Firstly, this irritation of the digestive lining can impact greatly upon breaking down and absorbing nutrients. When food does not get digested properly this can then lead to food intolerances. Food intolerances as mentioned above cause a release of excitatory chemicals which can keep your child awake at night.

Secondly, the beneficial flora in our digestive system is needed to manufacture serotonin. Serotonin is a neurotransmitter that helps keep us calm, happy and relaxed. Serotonin is also the precursor to melatonin our body's natural sleep chemical. So in order to keep your child calm and happy and getting good sleep, he needs to have adequate beneficial bacteria in his digestive system.

Solution: SleepDrops for Kids and a probiotic supplement. Give your child a probiotic supplement with the appropriate strains such as Lactobacillus gasseri, Bifidobacterium bifidum, Bifidobacterium longum.

Mineral Deficiencies

We commonly see clients including children with mineral deficiencies in our sleep clinic. Mineral deficiencies are a leading cause of sleep disturbances. Minerals are lacking in our food chain because of modern agricultural methods, food processing and New Zealand soils being deficient in certain minerals. The most common deficiency that we see affecting sleep is Magnesium. Magnesium and Calcium work together in a ratio and often due to a diet high in dairy and low in vegetables, it is very easy for our Magnesium/Calcium ratio to get out of balance. Even when the diet is high in vegetables the soils that they grow in can have very low magnesium levels. Babies can often be born with deficiencies if the mother was deficient when she was pregnant. Magnesium deficiency can manifest in children as hyperactivity, night terrors, teeth grinding, inability to settle easily and inability to get to sleep and stay asleep!

Solution: SleepDrops for Kids and SleepDrops Essential Sleep & Stress Nutrients powder.



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SUPPORT TO HELP YOUR KIDS SLEEP

SleepDrops for Kids



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SleepDrops for Kids

SleepDrops for Kids are a natural and safe sleep formula to support healthy quality sleep in children. This unique formulation has been developed to address common reasons children have trouble sleeping. These easy to use SleepDrops for Kids help to settle over stimulated children, reduce worry and gently aid sleep. Great tasting - just give 5 drops under the child's tongue before bed or when needed during the night.

HELPFUL TIPS TO GET YOUR CHILD TO SLEEP....

1. SEE THE SLEEPDROPS PRODUCT RANGE PROTOCOL SHEET FOR GUIDELINES

2. IT ALL STARTS IN THE DAY....AND THE AFTERNOON AND THE EVENING...

Child psychologists agree that quality time with your children during the day helps them to be more settled and sleep better. So make sure you are not too busy with your "day" to give them what they need.

School aged children:

When your child gets home from school or when you get home from work they are usually needing your attention as they haven't seen you all day. You need to reconnect. Make sure you put aside some special time for your child purely to give them the attention they need when they get home. It can just be ten minutes of sitting down with them asking them about their day, playing a game, helping them with their homework, whatever is appropriate. But once your child feels like he has had some of the attention he needs from you, he is less likely to go to bed feeling unsettled about this and calling out to get some attention later in the evening.

3. KEEP EVENING ENTERTAINMENT CALM AND NOT TOO EXCITING!

Don't let your child watch a scary movie or an action movie just before bed or you may find them stimulated or too scared to go to sleep. This also includes action packed computer games, playstation & anything that keeps them excited. Artificial light emitted from computers, TV's, cell phones can all impact on your child's ability to get to sleep as it can interrupt their natural circadian rhythm which is governed by light and dark. Research has also shown that interactive activities such as texting, talking on the phone, playing video games and even surfing the net in the evening can disrupt the sleep-onset process. It can delay sleep by up to an hour and a half. So if bed time is 8pm then stop them playing on the computer between 6 & 6:30pm. Try to encourage passive non-electrical activities before bed such as reading a book or playing with toys.

4. DON'T DEVELOP BAD HABITS THAT MAY COME BACK TO BITE YOU FOR YEARS TO COME!

Your child needs to be taught how to get himself to sleep without you. To find out how to do this read on...

5. DEVELOP A WIND DOWN ROUTINE

Develop a "wind down" routine every evening to re-enforce to your child that it's time to literally start "winding down". This is very effective for settling their nervous system. You want this to be a warm, loving and comfortable routine that includes the same activities performed in the same order every night. This will allow your child to get to know this routine and know instinctively each night that it is time to start winding down. The routine can include whatever works for your family. This may be patting your child's back, putting pyjama's on, singing a lullaby, saying a prayer, putting their toys to bed, quiet time with mum or dad or reading a bed time story.

6. DEVELOP A BEDTIME ROUTINE

Bedtime! After your wind down routine you may want to tuck your child in with their favourite blanket or toy and have some kind of verbal exchange that you say the same words every night. You may say something like "Good night, sleep tight, I love you" or whatever works for you. Try to always say the same words in the same order. Your child will feel safe and comforted and will then go to their sleeping position ready to fall asleep.

7. NO MORE TEARS AND TANTRUMS

In some families bedtime can turn into tears and tantrums which are usually more distressing for you as the parent than it is for the child! It leaves you exhausted and at your wit's end and ready to do just about ANYTHING to get your child to sleep, bribery and cajoling may be your next plan of attack.

Unfortunately this pattern of behaviour is not helpful because your child is associating distress with the idea of going to sleep. You may unwillingly be helping your child to believe that bedtime can be a scary time when you will leave them in a dark room feeling abandoned to face their fears all alone. The tears and tantrums can also be to get parental attention as in a child's mind negative attention is better than none at all! The best way to deal with these is firstly always give your child some positive attention at the end of the day as in point 2. Then establish good wind down and bed time rituals so that your child can fall asleep on their own. Help your child to associate the idea of going to bed with positive feelings by doing the routines mentioned above, spend 10 minutes of calming activity, tuck your child in with a blanket or their favorite toy, say your bedtime verbal exchange, sit with him for a few minutes then give a hug and a kiss and leave the room.

8. LEAVING THE ROOM

Yes leaving the room is ok! Even if your child is still awake. In fact leaving the room while your child is awake is recommended. This is important so that your child doesn't associate you as the sleep onset association object. You do not want to be that for the next 10 years! If you always wait until your child is asleep before leaving the room then you are teaching her that she can't go to sleep without your presence. Leaving the room is teaching her that it is ok to fall asleep without you and she can do it all on her own.

OTHER IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS:

Birth experience: How your child was born may have a huge impact on how your child sleeps

If your child's time in the birth canal was too short then their cranial rhythms (which are sending messages from the nervous system down your baby's spine to their organs) may not have been initiated properly. Conversely, if their time in the birth canal was too long the cranial bones may be "jammed" and therefore the cranial rhythms - may also be compromised. This also applies to ventouse and forceps deliveries.

If your child was born by cesarean section the same applies - compromised cranial rhythms. This can lead to inadequate digestion, intestinal spasms, irregular peristalsis (wave like movements) of the large intestines resulting in indigestion, reflux, constipation, diarrhoea etc. While this means they may also be unhappy during the day, we are here to focus on sleep so what it means for sleeping is quite simply that it will be compromised too. Gas bubbles in their bellies, sore tummies and spasming intestines will not allow your child to sleep easily. They may have trouble getting to sleep and will most likely wake frequently.

Solutions: SleepDrops for Kids and Cranial Osteopathy. Please make sure you see a registered Osteopath.

Food Intolerances affecting sleep...

Food intolerances: Children can have low grade food intolerances which can cause a range of symptoms from digestive problems, gas, sinusitis, glue ear, frequent colds, asthma symptoms, sleep disturbances, fatigue, irritability, eczema and the list goes on.....

You may have already taken your child to the Doctor and the allergy test may have come back as negative. The usual tests done by GP's only test for one type of antibody - IgE antibodies. This is what is called a true food allergy. True food allergy is actually quite rare with only about 2.5% of the population being diagnosed with the condition. If your child does have a "true food allergy" with IgE antibodies you would most likely know about it as the symptoms can be quite severe and come on quickly.

What we see in clinic more often is low grade food intolerances, these are usually caused by IgG antibodies and the symptoms can be vague and can take up to 48 hours to appear after ingesting the allergen. So what does this have to do with your child's ability to sleep?