



Antibiotics usually not needed for early respiratory infection

British researchers looked at 3.36 million episodes of respiratory infections and made the following conclusions: (1)

- Complications from sore throat, sinus and ear infections are rare, and do not justify routine use of antibiotics to prevent them.
- The cough associated with acute bronchitis lasted just as long whether treated with antibiotics for not.
- The exception was in the elderly. Antibiotics are justified to prevent pneumonia after acute bronchitis in patients 65 and older.
- The authors state that the best management of acute infection is *watchful waiting*.
- Patients who received antibiotics were more satisfied with their doctor's care.

Comment: Antibiotics do absolutely nothing to treat the viral infection, and are probably not needed to prevent secondary bacteria infection. Taking antibiotics is bad for your health, and may breed dangerous antibiotic-resistance. Keep antibiotics in reserve for serious problems. Use natural treatments. See [Sensible News 48](#).

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SLEEP is the magic pill you've been looking for.

Are you irritable and fatigued? Do you have difficulty concentrating? Are you gaining weight? Do you crave sugar?

You may be sleep deprived. In fact, if you do not get 8 hours sleep per night, then you are sleep deprived.

Being sleep deprived is like being drugged. Harvard researcher Prof Charles Czeisler of Harvard University says that: "Getting only five hours' sleep each night for a week... induces an impairment equivalent to a blood alcohol level of 0.10 per cent." (2)

What is the result of sleep deprivation?

- **Mental and emotional problems.** Brain studies show that sleep-deprived people have exactly the same brain patterns as people with depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. (Which begs the question: Does depression cause sleep problems, or does sleep deprivation cause depression?) (3)
- **Obesity.** People with even 1 hour too little sleep (6-7 hours) are significantly more likely to gain weight. (4) (The result of abnormal insulin, leptin, cortisol levels, and because of increased eating when we're sleep deprived.)
- **Increased risk for heart disease**
- **Increased risk for breast and colon cancer** because of melatonin deficiency.
- **Increased risk for diabetes** because of disturbed insulin balance.
- **Hormonal problems.** The disturbance in leptin insulin, cortisol and progesterone contributes to PCOS and other hormonal disorders.
- **Accelerated aging.** Because of elevated cortisol levels.
- **Headaches**
- **Allergies and low immunity**

Why do we need 8 hours?

Sleep is a dynamic process with important cycles that must be completed. For example, the brain needs the final stages of REM sleep that occur just before waking.

The body needs the important hormonal changes that occur during sleep:

- Melatonin increases. This reduces cortisol, assists immune function, and regulates communication between the pituitary and ovaries.
- Cortisol reduces, allowing insulin to function better.
- Leptin sensitivity. During sleep, the body becomes more sensitive to this weight loss hormone
- Growth hormone: There is a surge in this anabolic hormone during the 8th hour of sleep. Who needs injections?

What if you cannot sleep?

Modern lifestyle in the main culprit for many of us. We stay up too late, and we get up too early. Electric lights prevent us from feeling sleepy, because they prevent the rise in melatonin.

TIPS:

- Turn the lights out after dinner. Read or watch TV with a lamp.
- Exercise in the late afternoon. This will help to lower cortisol, and allow melatonin to rise when it gets dark.
- Avoid coffee after mid-day. Avoid chocolate after 5pm.
- Do not work before bed. Allow 2 hours of relaxation time before you lie down to sleep. If you need to get up by 7am, then you need to be asleep by 11pm, and you *need to be relaxing by 9pm*.
- Get sun in the morning. This triggers proper cycling of cortisol and melatonin.

What medical problems prevent sleep?

- Depression and anxiety
- Drop in oestrogen at menopause
- Thyroid and adrenal problems
- Iron deficiency
- Food allergies
- Liver disease
- Sleep apnea
- Blood sugar problems

Consult your Naturopath to treat the underlying cause.

Useful supplements for sleep:

- **Melatonin.** Take 1-5mg at bed-time. Melatonin is now available without a prescription from some Australian dispensaries. Read the label. Homeopathic melatonin does not work as well. Melatonin is safe to use long-term.
- **B-vitamins.** Take them in the *morning* to assist with healthy mood and brain chemistry. This will promote sleep at night. (Don't take B-vitamins at night)
- **Calcium and Magnesium** at bedtime. To relax the nervous system.
- **5-HTP.** This is Tryptophan, and amino acid that converts to melatonin
- **Herbs:** Zizyphus, Hops, Passion flower, Oat straw. Be careful with Valerian as it is 'heating'.

Aspirin may not prevent heart attacks in women

A large meta-analysis study has found that, in terms of heart-attack prevention, women may be 2.3 to 2.5 times more resistant to aspirin than men. (5) This connects to other findings that cholesterol-lowering medications do not protect women from heart-attack as well as they do men.

Comment: The bottom line is that physiologically, women are different than men. The interesting thing about this study is that the researchers had to infer the finding from looking at studies that had greater levels of women vs. men. In other words, there is no study that has directly measured women's response to aspirin. In fact, there have been very few studies at all about heart disease in women. And yet, doctors prescribe to women exactly as they would prescribe to men.

Heart attack and stroke are the number one killers in our society. How can you prevent it?

- Check your homocysteine with blood test. Homocysteine is a powerful predictor of heart disease, *especially in women*.
 - If homocysteine higher than 7, lower it with trimethylglycine (TMG) and B-vitamins.
- Check your C-reactive protein with blood test. (Talk to your Naturopath about how to reduce this inflammation)
- Correct insulin resistance if you have it.
- Supplement magnesium.
- Do not smoke
- Avoid trans-fat.
- Avoid the Pill and HRT
- Sleep!
- Be as happy as you can. Let go of anger, which is very bad for the heart.

References:

- (1) Barclay, L et al. Antibiotics Not Justified for Respiratory Tract Infections, Sore Throat, or Otitis Media. *BMJ* online publication October 19, 2007
- (2) Herald Sun. Aug 27, 2007
- (3) New Scientist magazine, 26 October 2007, page 22
- (4) Gangwisch JE et al. Inadequate sleep as a risk factor for obesity: analyses of the NHANES I. *Sleep*. 2005. 28(10):1289-96
- (5) Yerman T, Gan WQ, Sin DD. The influence of gender on the effects of aspirin in preventing myocardial infarction. *BMC Med*. 2007;5:29. Published online October 18, 2007.

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