



SLEEP TIME:
AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PAIN CONTROL

This bulletin was motivated by a letter I received this week that said “I’m on amitriptyline 25 mg. I tried not taking it and within a week I learned my lesson.” For reasons that aren’t perfectly clear amitriptyline and its sister compound, nortriptyline, taken at bedtime, relieve pain the next day. It is generally believed that these 2 agents alter acetylcholine metabolism in the central nervous system (CNS) so they lower pain levels hours and even days after they are taken. Besides amitriptyline and nortriptyline, trazodone taken at bedtime may relieve pain the next day. Ask your primary care physician (PCP) for a 2-week trial. You can’t hurt yourself and you may benefit greatly.

Biologic Attributes of Sleep: Sleep naturally gives your musculoskeletal system a break. During sleep your body replenishes its hormones and many neurotransmitters. It also goes into a growth/healing cycle (anabolic) to build and regenerate any damaged, tired, or diseased tissues. Persons with AA and other chronic pain conditions can take advantage of this fact.

Bedtime is an excellent time to take peptides, hormones, and vitamin preparations. Examples: BPC-157, colostrum, deer antler velvet, DHEA, pregnenolone, vitamins B-12, C, D.

Bedtime Pain Relievers: It varies greatly from person to person, but these medicinals, when taken at bedtime may reduce pain levels the next day. Try each to find one that suits you.

1. Tryptophan or 5HTP, 500 to 1000 mg
2. Melatonin, 10 to 20 mg
3. Taurine, 2000 to 3000 mg
4. Glutamine, 2000 to 3000 mg

Chronic Insomnia: Those persons who can’t sleep should obtain a sleep aid from their PCP. We do not favor one sleep aid over another for insomnia. Our strong recommendation is that if pain keeps you awake, take a sleep aid.

No Concern: Some pain patients feel they must have 6 to 8 hours of continuous sleep. This is not true. Many pain patients can only sleep 2 to 4 hours before they are awakened by pain. If this is the case, simply take a pain reliever, take a short walk, and then return to bed. Sleep does not have to be continuous to be beneficial.