

Melatonin and Sleep

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Melatonin is a hormone produced in the pineal gland and affecting the brain. Melatonin is involved in the regulation of the circadian rhythm function, which controls the sleep/wake cycle, it is produced in an unaffected brain during the period of 'biological night'. Problems in the functioning of this system can therefore lead to sleep disorders. Jet lag, shift work and chronic illness can all lead to a disruption of the circadian rhythm.

Exogenous melatonin can help to reduce symptoms by inducing sleep and lowering the core body temperature. Exogenous melatonin can also influence the endogenous secretion of melatonin which can "reset" the circadian clock.

There are many scientific citations that document the relationship between melatonin and sleep. Some of those papers are cited below:

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