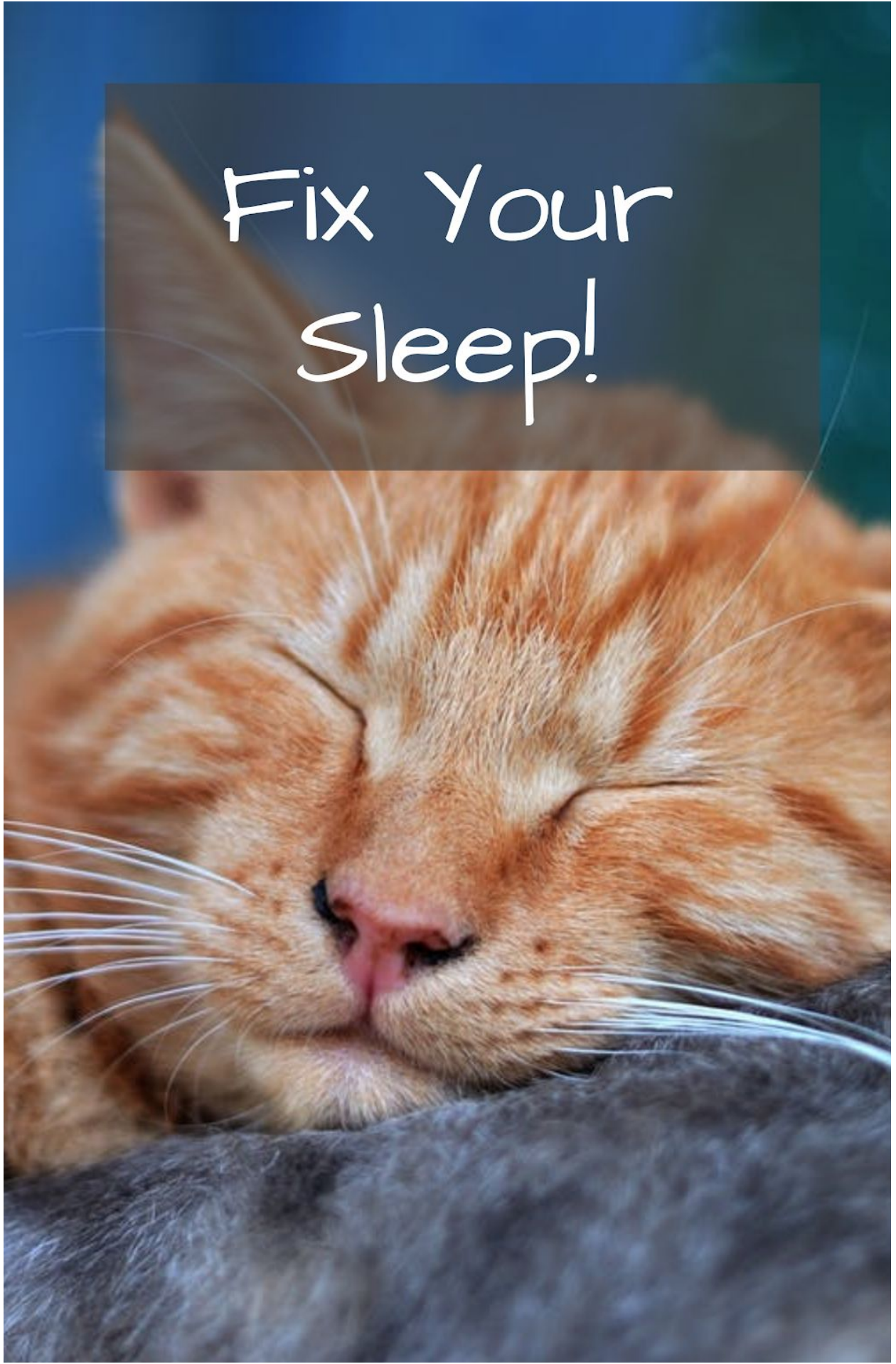


Fix Your  
Sleep!



# How to Fix Your Sleep

According to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine and the Sleep Research Society, “Americans should sleep 7 or more hours per night on a regular basis.”

Conditions associated with regularly sleeping fewer than 7 hour a night include:

- weight gain
- obesity
- diabetes hypertension
- heart disease
- stroke
- depression
- overall increased risk of death
- sleep is also important for cognitive function! Lack of sleep means less plasticity for the brain. Brain plasticity is important because this is what allows us to form memories, learn new things, and keeps us from sliding into dementia as we age.

## 10 Strategies for Successful Sleep:

1. Establish a bedtime routine and a set bedtime. If you have kids, you know that they thrive with a bedtime routine. Well, we adults are no different. Doing the same thing every night gives your body the cues it needs to be ready to fall asleep. This is especially important for those of you who toss and turn when you lay down.
2. Avoid blue lights from tv, computers, and smart phones for at least one hour before bed (or wear blue-blocking glasses). It is possible that the blue light emitted from these devices affects the quality of your sleep. If you must use screens up until bedtime, use blue-blocking glasses if possible.
3. Regulate your blood sugar. This is especially important for those of you who wake in the middle of the night in that 1-3 am time slot. Very often, low blood sugar is the cause of this waking. In the beginning, a small snack with protein and fat right before bed can help you get over this hump.
4. Avoid caffeine after noon (or after 9 am if you have adrenal issues) Or quit caffeine altogether! This is a tough one. I like my morning beverage just as much as the next person, but limiting your caffeine intake to one cup and never after 9 am can really help you fall asleep as well as help with blood sugar regulation.
5. Don't take prescription or over-the-counter (OTC) sleep aids! These make you unconscious (like alcohol). You are not actually sleeping!
6. Proper hydration is key. Not drinking enough water throughout the day can effect your sleep quality. So can drinking a bunch of water before bed to "make up" for the water you didn't drink during the day because you will need to wake to pee.
7. Regular exercise (but not right before bed) Exercise is important to a good night's sleep as well, but it is important not to work out right before bed as this will release cortisol (your fight or flight) hormone and may keep you awake too long.

8. Have a good sleep environment: Things like an essential oil diffuser with a “sleepy” blend of oils, a fan so that you don't get too hot, a noise maker for some white noise, and dark curtains or black out blinds can take your sleep experience to the next level.
9. Use a magnesium spray about 20 minutes before you want to be asleep. The majority of Americans eating the Standard American Diet are deficient in magnesium. Magnesium is an important mineral to get your body back into the parasympathetic state (relaxed) from the sympathetic state (fight or flight) that many of us run around in all day.
10. Keep your bedroom for sleeping. Move out the tv so that the temptation is not there. Don't work in your bedroom if possible either. You want your body to feel relaxed when entering your sleep environment.