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*The*

# THE HORMONE CURE

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DR. SARA GOTTFRIED, M.D.



*Dr. Sara's 8 Rules  
For Optimal Sleep*

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*8 Rules for Optimum Sleep*

Day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Bedtime last night?							
How long to fall asleep?							
Awakenings during night?							
How long awake during awakenings?							
Your final wakeup time?							
Total sleep (how long from bedtime to final wake up)?							
Quality of your sleep last night on a scale of 1-10 (1=terrible, 10= restorative)							

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## *8 Rules for Optimum Sleep*

### *1. Cut Alcohol*

Some people believe having a little bit of alcohol before bed helps them fall asleep. And they may be right. However, because the way alcohol is metabolized in the body it impairs sleep during the second half of the night, leading to a reduction in overall sleep time.

### *2. Cut Caffeine*

Caffeine is a stimulant. If you're having trouble sleeping cut back so that you don't ingest any caffeine at least 5 hours before you go to bed. If that doesn't work, try cutting it out altogether. Everyone responds to caffeine differently. See what works for you.

### *3. Avoid Large Meals Before Bed*

When you eat a large meal your body starts working hard to digest it. That takes a lot of energy. At night, let your body do what it wants to do, calm down so you can sleep. Plus going to bed on a full stomach is uncomfortable. Give yourself three hours between your last meal and sleep time. Your body will thank you, and so will your leptin!

### *4. Darken Your Bedroom*

In the "The Paleo Solution" Robb Wolf describes the chemical processes that are at work when we sleep. There are proteins in our red blood cells that register

light and carry this information to our brains. The information gets in the way of the hormone melatonin, which in turn wreaks havoc on our cortisol levels, leading to poor and disrupted sleep. Blacking out your room can help eliminate that problem.

### *5. Love Up Delicious Bedding*

Do I even need to tell you to do this! When you hop into a bed that has been lovingly made up with luxurious bedding, it's hard not to feel pampered. If you're going to be in bed every night, you might as well make it delicious.

### *6. Keep Room Cold*

The National Sleep Foundation suggests that temperatures above 75 and below 54 can disrupt sleep, but science shows women sleep best at 64 degrees. Saves carbon too! But everyone is different. The ideal is to keep your room cool (to you) so that you're comfortable. It's hard to sleep if you're too hot or too cold so take the Goldilocks approach...and hope your partner agrees!

### *7. Create Sanctuary: Sleep + Sex Only*

If you're having trouble sleeping one of the best things you can do is strengthen the association between bed

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and sleep. If you are one to bring your laptop to bed or do work emails in bed or even watch TV in bed, then pretty soon being in bed simply means it time for work or to be entertained. Not a good precursor to sleep. Don't engage in activities that cause you anxiety and may prevent you from sleeping.

### *8. Keep a Ritual*

Our sleep-wake cycle is regulated by the "circadian clock" in our brain and our body's need to balance

sleep time and wake time. When you wake up at the same time every day you strengthen the circadian function, which can help you sleep better at night. The more regular you can keep your sleep and wake time, even on the weekends, the better chance you'll have at getting good sleep. When your circadian rhythm is off, you create a bad neighborhood in your body and increase inflammation - we don't want that!