Sleep Friendly Food & Drink Guide

A quick-reference list to help you choose foods and drinks that naturally support deeper, more restorative sleep.

Best Foods for Better Sleep

1. Foods High in Magnesium

Magnesium relaxes the nervous system, reduces tension, and supports melatonin production.
Great options:

- Almonds
- Cashews
- Pumpkin seeds
- Spinach
- Bananas
- Avocado
- Black beans

2. Foods Rich in Tryptophan

Tryptophan converts into serotonin and melatonin, helping your body wind down.
Great options:

- Turkey and chicken
- Eggs
- Cheese or Greek yogurt
- Salmon
- Tofu and soy products
- Oats

3. Complex Carbohydrates

These help tryptophan enter the brain more easily.
Great options:

- Whole grain bread or toast
- Sweet potatoes
- Brown rice
- Quinoa
- Oats

4. Calcium-rich Foods

Calcium helps the brain use tryptophan to make melatonin.
Great options:

- Greek yogurt
- Cottage cheese
- Kefir
- Low-sugar yogurt bowls
- Sardines

5. Healthy Fats

Help regulate hormones and reduce inflammation that can interfere with sleep.
Great options:

- Walnuts
- Flax seeds
- Chia seeds
- Fatty fish (salmon, sardines, trout)
- Olive oil

6. Hydrating Foods

Even mild dehydration can affect sleep quality.
Great options:

- Water-rich fruits (watermelon, berries, oranges)
- Cucumbers
- Leafy greens
- Coconut water (low sugar)

Sleep Friendly Drinks

1. Warm Herbal Teas

Best 60 to 90 minutes before bed.
Top choices:

- Chamomile tea
- Lemon balm tea
- Passionflower tea
- Lavender tea
- Rooibos

2. Golden Milk (Turmeric Latte)

Anti-inflammatory and soothing; drink warm in the evening. Ingredients often include turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, and warm milk (dairy or plant-based).

3. Warm Milk or Protein Nightcap

Provides tryptophan + a steady release of amino acids. Great if your sleep is disturbed by blood sugar drops.

4. Tart Cherry Juice

One of the only foods naturally containing melatonin. Drink a small amount (60 to 120 ml) 1 to 2 hours before bed.

5. Magnesium Drinks

Magnesium glycinate or magnesium citrate powder mixed with warm water.

Foods & Drinks That Hurt Sleep

Avoid 4 to 6 hours before bed.

1. Caffeine

- Coffee
- Energy drinks
- Pre-workouts
- Green or black tea
  Even afternoon caffeine can disrupt deep sleep.

2. Heavy, High-Fat Meals

Your digestion works harder, raising body temperature and interfering with falling asleep.

3. Spicy Foods

Can cause acid reflux and increase core temperature.

4. Alcohol

Helps you fall asleep faster but destroys REM, causes waking, and increases dehydration.

5. High-Sugar Foods

Cause blood sugar spikes and crashes during the night.
Examples:

- Chocolate
- Candy
- Pastries
- Ice cream
- Sugary cereals

Best Pre-Bed Snack Ideas

Small, simple, and sleep-supportive.

- Greek yogurt with a few berries
- Banana with almond butter
- Oatmeal with cinnamon
- Whole grain toast with peanut butter
- Cottage cheese and pineapple
- Handful of walnuts or pumpkin seeds
- Rice cake with almond butter
- Turkey roll-up

Evening Eating Principles for Better Sleep

- Keep snacks small and balanced.
- Combine protein + complex carbs + a little fat.
- Avoid large meals within 3 hours of bedtime.
- Stay hydrated through the day, not before sleep.
- Create a consistent evening eating routine to regulate your circadian rhythm.

Morning & Daytime Eating Tips (Helps Nighttime Sleep)

Most people skip this part, but it matters.

- Eat breakfast within 60 to 90 minutes of waking to anchor your circadian clock.
- Include protein at every meal (20 to 35g).
- Avoid long gaps between meals to keep blood sugar stable.
- Limit caffeine after 2 PM.
- Stay hydrated throughout the day (2 to 3 liters depending on activity).