

Pain and occasional sleeplessness are big roadblocks to recovery. Here's some natural help.



Medical therapy is often the first line of therapy for managing symptoms of fibromyalgia, Lyme disease, chronic fatigue, and other chronic illness. **Drugs offer value for treating symptoms, but at the same time, can create dependence and compromise healing.**

All drugs have value, but some drugs should be used more carefully than others. Whenever possible, opt for natural and alternative options for finding relief (and be sure to work with your healthcare provider to make the right decisions for you).

Here are some to consider for help with overcoming occasional sleeplessness and easing pain.

Natural Therapies for Inviting Sleep

[HPA Balance®](#) is formulated with ashwagandha, Chinese tree bark, and L-theanine to normalize stress hormones. By normalizing the stress response, HPA Balance allows for calm during a stressful day, but also supports normal sleep at night without causing daytime sedation.

[Sleep Complete™](#) contains lemon balm, passion flower, and L-theanine, all herbs with natural sedative properties. The ingredients in this supplement are safe and have no known habituating tendencies.

Neither HPA Balance or Pure Calm are as potent as drug therapy, but because they have no habituating properties, they can be taken every day.

There are many natural substances with sedative properties, but **kava** is the only natural supplement with potency similar to drugs. Kava offers muscle relaxing properties; it also

enhances deep sleep. A good quality kava product, with a high ratio of kavalactones, can be as potent as a benzodiazepine.

There are many kava cultivars from throughout the South Pacific (offering slightly different properties). Kavalactone concentrations in pastes and powdered products range from 30% to 70%. The recommended kavalactone daily dose is 70-200 mg, with a maximal kavalactone dose of 300 mg per day.

Like drug therapy, kava has potential to be habituating and should be reserved for intermittent use. It can be used for several days in a row during a crisis situation, but should not be used for weeks on end. Tolerance will develop with chronic use.

Kava has been defined as having potential to cause liver damage with chronic use, but reports of liver toxicity are inconsistent and may be related to inclusion of bark, stems, and leaves in preparations (traditionally, kava is prepared with cold water infusion using only the root with bark removed) or fungal toxin contaminants (mycotoxins).

Even so, if you chose to use kava with any regularity, have your liver function checked before and after a period of use. Because kava hits the same receptors as benzodiazepines, it is not useful as a substitute for weaning off benzodiazepines. Kava use should be avoided during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

Cranial Electrotherapy Stimulation (CES) is a simple device that utilizes low intensity pulsed electrical current across the head to induce a relaxed state or sleep. It is a gentle, safe, and non-invasive method of normalizing the neurotransmitters in the brain. It can provide relief from anxiety, insomnia, depression, and habituation to medications. CES was covered in a previous email.

Natural Therapies for Easing Pain

Pain is possibly the most disabling symptom of fibromyalgia, Lyme disease, and other chronic illness. Controlling pain acutely is essential for recovery to progress.

Natural herbal alternatives that work specifically for pain include corydalis, from Traditional Chinese Medicine, and Indian pipe (*Rauvolfia serpentina*), which has been used on the Asian subcontinent for relief of pain and occasional sleep troubles for thousands of years.

Turmeric and boswellia (both in [Joint Care™](#)) offer optimal support for tissues in the body. They contain both aqueous (water) and lipid (fat) soluble components, which provide potent joint support and antioxidant properties. This makes them ideal for maintaining healthy joints.

Essential oils rubbed into joints can be very beneficial for controlling joint pain. A favorite product is Oil of Ojas, from the Caribbean island of Dominica. The product is as perfect a balance of essential oils. It works and does not burn skin or cause other side effects.

Raising endorphin levels is important for managing pain. Having normal endorphin levels is intimately tied to good health and wellbeing. Baseline secretion of endorphins can be

increased with regular exercise, vigorous massage and acupuncture. Qigong exercises and yoga are a great way to get started.

Chronic stress decreases endorphins, and not surprisingly, **regular practice of meditation or relaxation techniques stimulates endorphins**. Just having a warm friendly attitude will also increase endorphins.

*These statements have not been evaluated by the Food and Drug Administration. These products are not intended to diagnose, treat, cure, or prevent any disease. Always consult your qualified healthcare provider before beginning any diet or program.

RESOURCES

Additional resources on medication:

- When to Consider Antibiotic Therapy, [read more »](#)
- Boost Natural Killer Cells to Beat Chronic Illness, [read more »](#)

Restore Kit core resources:

- [The Restore Kit Resource Page](#) (Bookmark this to reference all the resources and tools you need to succeed with this program!)
- [The Vital Plan Diet e-book](#)

The Vital Plan is a company devoted to enhancing wellness through education, support, and herbal supplements.

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