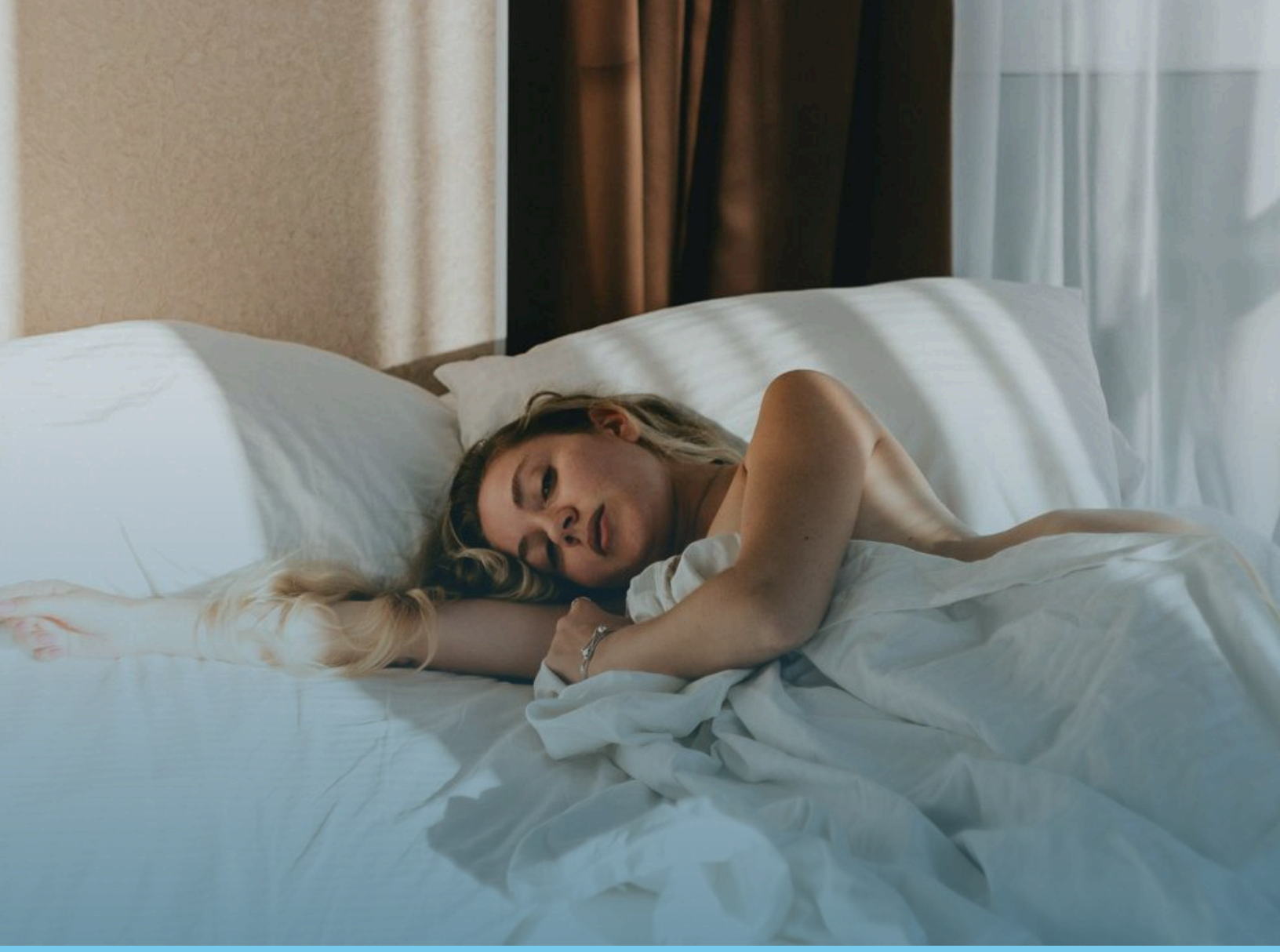


# THE 7-DAY SLEEP RESET

*Seven gentle days to get your rhythm back*

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WELCOME

# DOES THIS SOUND LIKE YOU?

- You're wide awake at 3 AM, mind racing, for no reason you can name.
- You're exhausted all day, then strangely wired the moment your head hits the pillow.
- Your brain feels foggy, and you need that second (or third) coffee just to get through the afternoon.
- The clocks changed, and your body never quite got the memo.

*I see you. I understand. And you absolutely can sleep better.*

Let's be honest about what you're carrying. You're leading at work, running a household and showing up for your kids, your partner and maybe your parents too, all while feeling the pressure to be Superwoman. At the same time, your hormones are shifting through perimenopause or menopause, and the estrogen and progesterone that used to help you sleep are changing. Then the clocks change, and your body's internal rhythm can't adjust overnight. No wonder you can't sleep. Your body isn't broken. It's doing its very best under an enormous load.

Sleep is run by a team of systems that all have to work together: your cortisol, your melatonin, your blood sugar, your nervous system and your hormones. When stress, hormone shifts and a time change all hit at once, those systems fall out of sync, and sleep is often the first thing to go.

**The good news?** Your body wants to find its rhythm. It just needs the right signals.

## WHAT THIS RESET IS

Seven compassionate days, with one simple focus a day. No guilt, no extremes. Each day adds one small shift on top of the one before, so by Day 7 you have a full routine that works with your body instead of against it.

**Over the week, we'll:**

| RESET | STEADY | QUIET | CALM | DEEPEN |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| your body clock with the right light at the right time | your energy so you're not running on fumes and caffeine | the 3 AM wake-ups by keeping blood sugar stable overnight | your nervous system so you can actually wind down | your sleep naturally, without forcing an early bedtime |

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

# A FEW GROUND RULES

- **Choose one wake time and stick with it, weekends too.** Your wake time sets your body clock far more than your bedtime does.
- **Don't force an earlier bedtime.** Go to bed when you feel sleepy. As your rhythm settles, that sleepiness will start showing up earlier on its own.
- **Expect a few bumpy nights.** It can take several days to a week for your body to catch up. A rough night midweek doesn't mean it isn't working.
- **Keep each day's shift as you go.** We're building, not starting over.

## WHY WINTER MAKES IT HARDER

As we head into winter, the days get shorter and darker. Many of us wake up before sunrise and spend our days indoors, so our body clock misses the strong morning light it relies on to know when the day begins. That makes it even harder to bounce back from a time change.

Here's what helps: light is one of the most powerful tools we have to reset your circadian rhythm.

- **Natural morning light first.** Getting outside within the first hour of waking, even on a cloudy day, sends your body a clear "it's morning" signal.
- **A light box when the sun isn't cooperating.** On dark winter mornings, sitting near a 10,000-lux light box for 20–30 minutes, first thing in the morning, can stand in for the sunrise. Keep it at eye level, about 16–24 inches away, while you have your coffee or check email. You don't need to stare at it. If you have an eye condition, bipolar disorder, or take medications that make you sensitive to light, check with your provider before using one.
- **Healthy vitamin D levels.** We make vitamin D from sunlight, so levels often drop in winter, and low vitamin D has been linked to poorer sleep. Ask your provider to test your levels, and supplement based on your results rather than guessing.



YOUR 7 DAYS

DAY 1

## SET YOUR ANCHOR

**Today's one focus: Morning light**

Your body clock needs a clear signal that the day has started, and nothing sends that signal like natural light.

- Get up at your chosen wake time, even if last night was rough.
- Within 30–60 minutes of waking, step outside: about 10 minutes on a sunny day, 20–30 minutes if it's cloudy. Leave the sunglasses off if you safely can (just never look straight at the sun).
- Up before sunrise? Use a 10,000-lux light box for 20–30 minutes, then get outside once the sun is up.
- Tonight, don't change a thing. Just notice when you naturally start to feel sleepy.

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DAY 2

## STEADY YOUR MORNING

**Today's one focus: Protein and smart caffeine**

Your cortisol is meant to rise in the morning and taper off by evening. When that curve gets flattened or flipped, you feel tired all day and wired all night.

- Eat breakfast within an hour of waking, and include protein: eggs, Greek yogurt, tofu or a protein smoothie.
- If you can, wait 60–90 minutes after waking for your first coffee. Light first, caffeine second.
- Set a caffeine cut off 8–10 hours before bed (usually noon to 2 pm).
- Drink most of your water earlier in the day.



DAY 3

## QUIET THE 3 AM WAKE-UP

**Today's one focus: Steady blood sugar through the night**

So many of my patients tell me they fall asleep fine, then wake at 2, 3 or 4 am like clockwork. Blood sugar dips overnight can be one piece of that puzzle.

- Have dinner 2–3 hours before bed, built around protein, fiber-rich vegetables and healthy fat, rather than mostly carbs or sweets.
- Hungry before bed? Choose a small snack with protein or fat: a few nuts, a little cheese or a spoonful of nut butter.
- Give alcohol a break this week, or keep it at least 3 hours before bed. It may help you drift off, but it breaks up the second half of your night.
- Ease off fluids in the last hour or two before bed.

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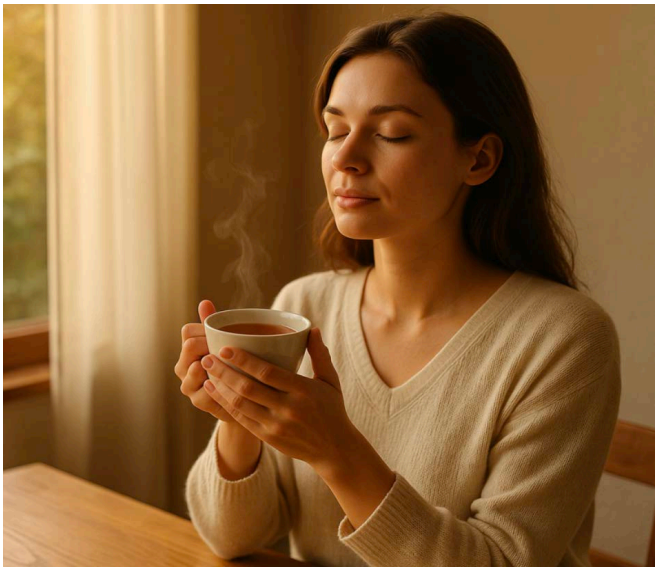
DAY 4

## BRING THE LIGHTS DOWN

**Today's one focus: An evening that feels like evening**

Melatonin is your body's "it's nighttime" hormone, and bright light in the evening tells it to wait.

- About 2 hours before bed, switch off overhead lights and use dim, warm lamps.
- Put screens on night mode and turn the brightness down. Better yet, close the work email and set the phone aside for the last hour.
- Make your bedroom dark (blackout curtains or an eye mask) and cool, around 60–67°F.
- If you wake in the night, keep the lights low and leave the phone where it is.



DAY 5

# CALM YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM

**Today's one focus: Downshifting from "go" mode**

If your body still feels on high alert at bedtime, sleep has a hard time getting in. Tonight we give your nervous system a clear path to rest.

- Create a 20–30 minute wind-down ritual you repeat every night. Keep it simple: tidy up for tomorrow, take a warm shower, read something on paper.
- Earlier in the evening, do a brain dump. Write down your to-dos and open loops so they're not spinning at midnight.
- Spend 3–5 minutes breathing slowly with a longer exhale: in for 4, out for 6–8.
- Save hard conversations, intense workouts and problem-solving for earlier in the day.

## ADD A CALMING TEA AND A SOOTHING SCENT

These are two of my favorite ways to tell your body it's time to rest.

- **Sip a caffeine-free herbal tea** about 60–90 minutes before bed. That way, it calms you without sending you to the bathroom at 2 am. Chamomile, lavender, tulsi (holy basil) and rose are lovely for winding down. If night sweats and hot flashes are waking you, try sage. Get my recipes in Dr. Helene's Restful Sleep: 5 Herbal Teas to Promote Sleep.
- **Diffuse a relaxing essential oil blend** in your bedroom while you wind down. My Good Sleep blend combines vetiver, ylang ylang and lavender, and my Stress Buster blend combines bergamot, lavender and cedarwood. Just 1–3 drops in your diffuser is plenty. Find all my blends in Aromatherapy for Relaxation and Sleep.



**A few safety notes:** my blends are for diffusing only, so please don't put them on your skin undiluted. They're for adults, so keep them away from children and pets. And if you're pregnant or breastfeeding, take blood thinners, antidepressants or other medications, or have allergies, check with your naturopathic doctor before trying a new herb or oil.

DAY 6

## DEEPER SLEEP, NATURALLY

**Today's one focus: Helping your brain link bed with sleep**

- Keep your bed for sleep and intimacy. No laptop, no scrolling.
- Awake for what feels like 20 minutes or more? Get up, do something calm in dim light, and go back to bed when you feel sleepy. And stop checking the clock.
- Keep your wake time steady, even after a short night. That built-up sleep pressure is what makes the next night deeper.
- If you nap, keep it to 20–30 minutes and finish before about 3 pm.

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DAY 7

## MAKE IT YOURS

**Today's one focus: Turning this week into your rhythm**

- Move your body during the day. A morning or early-afternoon walk outside gives you light and movement at once. Finish intense workouts a few hours before bed.
- Look back at your sleep log. What made the biggest difference for you?
- Choose your three non-negotiables to keep. For many people, it's a steady wake time, morning light and a caffeine cutoff.
- Put a reminder in your calendar for the next time change (we spring forward March 14, 2027) so you can run this reset again.

*Small, steady signals add up to deep, restful sleep.*

PRINT ME

# YOUR DAILY CHECKLIST

- [ ] Up at my set wake time
- [ ] Morning light within an hour of waking
- [ ] Protein at breakfast
- [ ] Caffeine before my cutoff
- [ ] Dinner 2–3 hours before bed; no alcohol close to bedtime
- [ ] Lights dimmed 2 hours before bed
- [ ] Wind-down ritual + slow breathing + herbal tea or my diffuser blend
- [ ] Went to bed when sleepy; got up if I was lying awake

# YOUR SLEEP LOG

| DAY | BEDTIME | WAKE TIME | NIGHT WAKE-UPS | ENERGY (1-5) | NOTES |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | | | | | |
| 2 | | | | | |
| 3 | | | | | |
| 4 | | | | | |
| 5 | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | |

AN HONEST NOTE

# WHAT THIS RESET CAN (AND CAN'T) DO

I want to be honest with you. This reset gives your body the signals it needs to find its rhythm, and many people feel a real difference in a week. But everyone is different, and I can't promise a specific result.

**Please talk with your healthcare provider if:**

- Your sleep struggles have lasted 3 months or longer, or they're affecting your daily life.
- You snore loudly, gasp or stop breathing in your sleep, or wake up exhausted after a full night. These can be signs of sleep apnea.
- Hot flashes, night sweats or mood shifts are waking you up. Hormone changes are one of the most common root causes of sleep trouble I see, and there is real help available.
- You're thinking about supplements like melatonin or magnesium, or you take medications that may affect sleep. Check with your provider first.

This reset is educational and isn't a substitute for individual medical care.

## WANT TO GO DEEPER?

If your sleep is tangled up with hormones, stress, weight or energy, you don't have to sort it out alone. I'm a licensed naturopathic doctor and IFM-certified functional medicine practitioner with over 20 years of experience, and I listen before I teach. Together, we'll find the root cause, not just chase the symptom.

**BOOK YOUR FREE 30-MINUTE DISCOVERY CALL**

calendly.com/helenepulnik/free-30-min-wellness-discovery-call

*You deserve to wake up feeling like yourself again.*

— Dr. Helene Pulnik, ND

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