

NATURAL HEALTH

AYURVEDA • HOMEOPATHY • ACUPUNCTURE • HERBALISM • AROMATHERAPY • REFLEXOLOGY

The good sleep guide

Tired of tossing and turning all night? Loathe to hit the sleeping pills? Jini Reddy picks the experts' brains to discover the drug-free way to a peaceful slumber



The TCM practitioner

Amanda J Cox

"While common factors contributing to insomnia include overwork, diet, or some emotional cause, in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) the first thing to rule out is anaemia, as this is considered the key to sleep. In cases of anaemia (or blood deficiency, as it's called), herbs are extremely effective in 'nourishing' the blood, which in turn settles the mind or heart.

"Similarly, acupuncture works by calming the heart, quietening the mind and reconnecting the two energetically. Once this connection is re-established normal sleep will follow. Acupuncture works to rebalance the 'channel' relevant to the patient. For example we can settle the heart via acupuncture or 'needling' points on the heart channel to decrease anxiety and calm the patient.

"There is also a point at the base of the occiput (back of the head) called 'an mian' which translates as 'peaceful sleep' and it is used specifically for insomnia. Acupuncture treatment has been scientifically proven to lower anxiety levels and increase sleep efficiency. Interestingly, in a study carried out by researchers at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, it was also shown to increase night time melatonin levels – the hormone that controls sleep."

To find out more, go to amandajcox.com

