

The 7 Best Melatonin Supplements of 2022, According to a Dietitian

Struggling to get your zzz's? These top melatonin supplements may help

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PLEASE NOTE: Dietary supplements are minimally regulated by the FDA, meaning there is no guarantee that they are effective for their claimed purposes, or, in some cases, are even safe. Food is the preferred source of nutrition, and many people can meet their nutritional needs from food alone. Supplements may be useful when there is a specialized diet, nutrient deficiency, or medical condition, but they are not treatments or cures for any diseases.

Some supplements are nutritional (with ingredients that can be found in food) and include vitamins, minerals, and macronutrients. These are the main focus of our writers' supplement coverage. In contrast, botanical dietary supplements are plant-derived products that are typically used for medicinal purposes, and most are not found in food. Botanicals should be treated with extra caution and utilized only if they have been proven both effective and safe and alongside the input and guidance of your healthcare provider. It is important to check with your healthcare provider before beginning any supplement regimen.

Melatonin is a hormone that plays a role in your circadian rhythm. It affects the natural process that regulates your body's sleep-wake cycle. Darkness triggers your brain to produce melatonin, and light can interfere with melatonin production, which is why it's often recommended to limit blue light from screens before bed. Melatonin production may reduce with age (especially in

post-menopausal women), in those who work night-shifts, and in people taking certain medications such as beta-blockers.

People often reach for sleep aids like melatonin supplements when they have trouble falling — or staying — asleep. But taking melatonin doesn't replace good sleep habits like having a consistent bedtime and wake time, [limiting caffeine](#) in the later parts of the day, and avoiding blue light from screens in the evening hours. "You always want to address the reason you're not sleeping well," says [Sharon Puello, MA, RDN, CDN, CDEC](#). Sleep disruptions can be related to lifestyle, environment, and medical conditions. Beyond [good sleep hygiene](#), regular exercise, managing stress and anxiety, and eating enough (both undereating and dieting have been linked to sleep problems) can help promote restful sleep.

Melatonin supplements may be helpful for some people who experience difficulty falling or staying asleep or have a disrupted sleep cycle. "Taking melatonin may shorten the time it takes people to fall asleep. It may also improve jet lag symptoms," says [Lisa Young, PhD, RDN](#).

Melatonin supplements are likely safe for most healthy adults when used for a short period of time and purchased from a reputable brand. However, there are a number of contraindications to taking melatonin including pregnancy, breastfeeding, some medical conditions, and taking certain medications.

Long-term daily melatonin use is generally not recommended, and it's important to weigh the risks and benefits. Melatonin can also leave you feeling dizzy or groggy in the morning, especially if sleep was disrupted, so use with caution if you have to drive, operate machinery, or care for others the next day. Higher doses can lead to stronger side effects — so be mindful about the amount you take.

"When choosing a melatonin supplement you'll want to pay attention to the dose. High-dose supplements can be more effective for some but leave you feeling groggy in the morning (and aren't always necessary)," says Puello. It's also "very important to choose melatonin supplements from a reputable source," says [Andrew Akhaphong, MS, RD, LD](#). Look for one that is third-party tested by an organization like USP or NSF. "This ensures the supplement provides its intended effect and includes what is on the label," says Akhaphong.

Who May Not Benefit from Melatonin

Even though melatonin is a hormone we naturally produce, supplements are a synthetic version, and the FDA doesn't review the safety of supplements before they go to market. Therefore, it's always important to discuss any supplement regimen with your healthcare provider to make sure it's safe for you.

There is no research on the safety of melatonin supplements in pregnant or lactating women, therefore it's best to avoid melatonin supplements [if you're pregnant or breastfeeding](#). In addition, "melatonin should be used cautiously in individuals with diabetes as it may increase blood sugar," says Akhaphong. It can also increase risk of bleeding, and interfere with anticoagulant medications.

Melatonin has also been shown to "interact with anticonvulsant medications that treat epileptic seizures, and may worsen depressive symptoms," says Akhaphong. It is also contraindicated for those with dementia. Ultimately, if you have any medical conditions or take any prescription medications, talk to your doctor before starting a melatonin supplement.

"People at high risk for bone fracture should think twice about melatonin supplements," says Puello. Research links melatonin supplement use to increased fracture risk.

Melatonin Efficacy

While taking melatonin is not a guaranteed ticket to a restful night of sleep, research does suggest that it improves sleep in those with insomnia. It may also be helpful for people with [some sleep disorders](#) like idiopathic REM sleep behavior disorder and delayed sleep-wake phase disorder. Research suggests that melatonin may improve or prevent migraine symptoms. However, analysis of 35 randomized control trials showed no evidence that melatonin supplements can help with the effects of night shift work.

It's also been shown to be effective at improving sleep for those who have trouble sleeping because of beta-blocker usage as well as Parkinson's related sleep disorders.

It's been proposed that melatonin can be an effective therapy for a number of other conditions including migraines and IBS. Research is limited in these areas, but some small studies do show symptom improvements.

Currently, the level of evidence to support use of melatonin for night-shift workers is very weak, and a review of the evidence on its use for jet lag suggests that it may provide very minimal benefit for some.

What to Look for in Melatonin Supplements

Third Party Testing

Supplements that are third-party tested are sent to a lab where they are tested to ensure they contain what they say they contain and are not contaminated with specific high-risk, common contaminants. However, it's important to note:

- 1. Third party testing does not test to see if a product is effective or safe for everyone, and it does not ensure the supplement will not interact with other supplements or medications.*
- 2. Not all third-party testing is created equal. It is not uncommon for supplement companies to pay labs for certificates after conducting minimal to no testing.*
- 3. The third party certifications we can trust are: ConsumerLabs, NSF, and USP. However, these certifications are difficult to obtain and/or expensive, so many companies choose not to get their products tested by one of these three organizations.*
- 4. Sometimes products tested by these three companies are more expensive to try to offset the cost they pay for certification.*
- 5. Just because a supplement is not tested by one of these three companies, it does not mean it's a bad product. We recommend doing some research on the reputability of the manufacturer, and calling up the manufacturer and their testing lab to determine their protocols and decide if you feel comfortable consuming the supplement.*

Form

Melatonin comes in a variety of forms including capsules, gummies, liquid, and even a spray. If choosing a gummy or liquid, [pay attention to added sugars](#) or alternative sweeteners, and be sure to brush your teeth after consuming any products with added sugars before going to bed to reduce risk of dental cavities.

Ingredients, Potential Interactions, and Contraindications

It is essential to carefully read the ingredient list and nutrition facts panel of a supplement to know which ingredients and how much of each ingredient is included, relative to the recommended daily value of that ingredient. Please bring the supplement label to your healthcare provider to review the different ingredients contained in the supplement and any potential interactions between these ingredients and other supplements and medications you are taking.

Some melatonin supplements contain additional sleep-promoting or stress-reducing aids [such as magnesium](#), vitamin B-6, L-theanine, and GABA. Magnesium and vitamin B-6 are safe for most people; however, upper limits should be considered in the context of any other vitamin or mineral supplements you're currently taking. The research on whether or not L-theanine and GABA provide benefits is limited, so it's likely best to choose a supplement that only contains melatonin.

Some products are vegan, gluten-free, and allergy-friendly while others are not. Check the label to ensure it fits within your dietary requirements.

Excess Melatonin/Melatonin Toxicity

There are currently no guidelines on the maximum amount of melatonin that is recommended, but higher doses can leave you feeling groggy and dizzy the next day, so be mindful about the amount you take. Most safety and efficacy studies have looked at doses between 200 mcg to 10mg, so it's not recommended you exceed a 10mg dose (and that may still be too much for many people) in 24 hours.

Melatonin Dosage

Always speak with a healthcare professional before adding a supplement to your routine to ensure that the supplement is appropriate for your individual needs and to understand which dosage to take.

Melatonin is available in a range of doses from 200 mcg to 10mg. Most research is conducted on lower doses, typically one to three milligrams, though there has been some research on higher doses up to 10mg.

"It's best to start at the lowest possible dose to see if it works," says Young. Always discuss dosage with your healthcare provider, but Young recommends most people start with one to three milligrams to see how they respond.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Is melatonin safe for kids?**

The American Academy of Sleep Medicine recommends taking caution with melatonin use in children.

Emerging research suggests that melatonin can be beneficial for kids with chronic insomnia as well as those with neurological disorders. However, there are no specific guidelines on dosage, duration, and when it's truly safe to use. A recent randomized control trial followed children with Autism Spectrum Disorder for 2 years and showed no adverse effects of daily melatonin on growth and development. Other studies suggest similar findings in this population. However, other studies suggest no benefit, though no adverse outcomes were observed either.

“There isn’t sufficient evidence to know if melatonin is safe for children to take or for long-term use,” says Young. Melatonin is a hormone, so there is concern that it could affect growth, development, and puberty. Since there haven’t been any long-term studies (beyond two years follow up), melatonin should be used with a lot of caution in children — and always discuss use and dosage with your child’s pediatrician before use.

- **How long does it take melatonin to work?**

Most supplements take 30 minutes to one hour to start to take effect, but this will vary by brand and each individual may respond differently to oral melatonin.

- **How long does melatonin last?**

The duration of effectiveness will vary by dose, brand, and whether or not it’s a time-release supplement. It will also vary by person and how sensitive they are to oral melatonin. Higher doses are more likely to leave lasting effects for some people into the next day.

Time release supplements are designed to mimic the body’s natural release of melatonin by slowly releasing it over the course of the night. These may help you stay asleep longer, especially for those with chronic insomnia.

- **How much melatonin is too much?**

The majority of research on the safety and efficacy of melatonin supplements has been done in doses between one to three milligrams. However smaller doses (especially in children, but in adults too), as well as higher doses up to 10 milligrams have been shown to be safe and effective.

The safe dose will vary by individual, but in general it is recommended to take the lowest effective dose possible and not exceed 10 milligrams.

- **Is it bad to take melatonin every night?**

Research on long-term use of melatonin is lacking, so the risks of long-term use are unknown. However, it's best to address any chronic sleep issues with your healthcare provider and potentially work with a sleep specialist to rule out other health conditions that could be affecting sleep.


How We Select Supplements

Our team works hard to be transparent about why we recommend certain supplements; you can read more about our [dietary supplement methodology here](#).

We support supplements that are evidence-based and rooted in science. We value certain product attributes that we find to be associated with the highest quality products. We prioritize products that are third-party tested and certified by one of three independent, third party certifiers: USP, NSF, or ConsumerLabs. We also prioritize non-GMO, Organic, and products that are free of unnecessary and potentially harmful additives.

It's important to note that the [FDA does not review dietary supplements](#) for safety and effectiveness before they go to market. Our team of experts has created a detailed, science-backed methodology to choose the supplements we recommend.

Here, the 8 best melatonin supplements:

 Thorne Research Melaton-3
Melatonin Supplement

Thorne Research Melaton-3 Melatonin Supplement

[Buy on Amazon](#)

Pros

Cons

- NSF certified for sport
- Vegan
- Moderate Dose
- Allergy-friendly

- N/A

Thorne Melaton-3™ checks all of the major boxes we look for when it comes to supplements. Not only is it [NSF-certified for sport](#), it's a good fit for anyone with food allergies or gluten-intolerance as it is free from all major eight allergens and is gluten-free. It's also appropriate for those on a vegan diet.

Thorne, a reputable supplement company, keeps things simple with only five ingredients, including melatonin, and no unnecessary extras that could increase side effect risks.

With 3-milligrams per capsule, this supplement contains a moderate dose that is likely appropriate for many individuals. Thorne also makes a slightly higher dose of the same supplement with five milligrams for those who might need a little more.

Dose: 3mg | **Form:** Capsule | **Servings Per Bottle:** 60

Nature Made Melatonin 3mg Tablets

[Buy on Amazon](#)

Pros

- USP certified
- Gluten-free
- Easy to swallow

Cons

- Not vegan

While melatonin is not an overly expensive supplement, there's no reason to spend more than necessary. Costing only pennies per serving, Nature Made Melatonin 3mg is perfect for those looking for a quality supplement at a reasonable price. Nature Made melatonin is USP verified, so you can rest assured that it includes the dose indicated with no hidden ingredients.

These melatonin tablets are small, making them easy to swallow even for those that may not do well with pills. Suitable for vegetarians (not vegans), they are also gluten-free.

Dose: 3mg | **Form:** Capsule | **Servings Per Container:** 240

 Swanson Melatonin 1 mg
Capsules

Swanson Melatonin 1 mg Capsules

[Buy on Amazon](#)

Pros

- NSF certified
- Top pick by consumerlabs.com
- Good starter option

Cons

- Not vegan

Swanson Melatonin 1mg is a quality supplement that is backed by both consumerlabs.com and is NSF certified. The lower dose is perfect for those that are new to melatonin or know they feel best with a lower dose. Remember — more isn't always better!

It's suitable for vegetarians (not vegans); however, allergen information is not readily available, so if allergies are a concern, it's best to contact the brand directly to determine safety.

Dose: 1mg | **Form:** Capsule | **Servings Per Container:** 120

Related: [The 8 Best B-Complex Supplements of 2022, According to a Dietitian](#)



Carlson Melatonin Gummies

[Buy on Amazon](#)

Pros

- Approved by consumerlabs.com
- Gluten-free
- Soy-Free
- Moderate Dose


Cons

- Contains sugar

Gummies can be a good choice for those that have difficulty swallowing capsules or tablets; however, many gummies are not certified by a third-party. Carlson melatonin gummies are backed by consumerlabs.com, making them a good choice.

They are gluten-free, soy-free, and provide a moderate dose of 2.5-milligrams, which is enough to support a restful night of sleep without overdoing it. Unlike many gummies that are packed with sugar, these only contain 1-gram per serving, making them a better choice especially for those watching sugar or carbohydrate intake.

Dose: 2.5mg | **Form:** Gummy | **Servings Per Container:** 60

 Now Foods Liquid Melatonin
2-Pack

Now Foods Liquid Melatonin 2-Pack

[Buy on Amazon](#)

Pros

- Top pick by consumerlabs.com
- Easy to consume
- Non-GMO


Cons

- Requires measuring dose

Now Liquid Melatonin is another good option for those who don't do well with capsules. It's a top pick by consumerlabs.com and is non-GMO, vegan, Kosher, gluten-free, and soy-free.

The 3-milligram dose does require some measurement to get to the ¼- teaspoon serving size (about 20 drops), which may not be overly convenient for some users, especially when traveling. However, the liquid form makes it easy to consume without water.

Dose: 3mg | **Form:** Liquid drops | **Servings Per Container:** 66

 Life Extension Melatonin
Vegetarian Tablets

Life Extension Melatonin Vegetarian Tablets

[Buy on Amazon](#)

Pros

- Available in 3 doses
- NSF Certified
- Non-GMO
- Gluten-free

Cons


- Not vegan

Time release melatonin may be helpful for those that have trouble staying asleep. Life Extension 6 Hour Time Release Melatonin comes in three doses — 300-micrograms, 750-micrograms and 3-milligrams. Lower doses might be helpful if time-release melatonin leaves you feeling groggy the next morning.

Life Extension is NSF certified, non-GMO, and gluten-free, and is suitable for vegetarians (not vegans).

Dose: Available in 300 mcg, 750 mcg, and 3mg | **Form:** Capsule | **Servings Per Container:** 60

Related: [The 10 Best Biotin Supplements of 2022, According to a Dietitian](#)

 Solgar Melatonin 3 mg
Nuggets

Solgar Melatonin 3 mg Nuggets

[Buy on Amazon](#)

Pros

- Top pick by consumerlabs.com
- Easy to swallow
- Allergy-friendly

Cons

- N/A

Long-time supplement maker, Solgar is a top pick by consumerlabs.com. Solgar's melatonin is suitable for those on a plant-based diet as well as those that are gluten-free, wheat-free, dairy-free, Kosher, and Halal.

This melatonin is what Solgar refers to as a "nugget," which is a very small tablet that is easy to swallow. While 3-milligrams is likely suitable for most people, Solgar does also make higher dose options at 5-milligrams and 10-milligrams. Check with your doctor on the best dose for you.

Dose: 3mg | **Form:** Nugget | **Servings Per Container:** 120

Related: [The 8 Best Iron Supplements of 2022, According to a Dietitian](#)

Final Verdict

For a quality melatonin supplement from a reputable brand, reach for Thorne Melaton-3™ ([view at Amazon](#)). It provides a moderate, well-studied dose and is appropriate for those with common food allergies and dietary restrictions.

32 Sources

Verywell Health uses only high-quality sources, including peer-reviewed studies, to support the facts within our articles. Read our [editorial process](#) to learn more about how we fact-check and keep our content accurate, reliable, and trustworthy.

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