

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S
Herbal Legacy Newsletter

My Super Secret Sleeping Formula

by Master Herbalist Jared Tropicke

There are many reasons why people can't sleep - from emotion things like stress and anxiety to mental alertness and physical inactivity and hormone imbalances. It would be incorrect to assume that one formula or suggested thing will fix all the sleeping problems.

There are a few suggestions besides herbs that will help to alleviate this problem. It is important to eat well and eliminate unhealthy habits like caffeine, sugars, and processed foods in your diet.



It is also important to be physically active. You will sleep much better with a little exercise during the week. I found it important to get outside. Do something that you enjoy. These last two might seem silly, but it is worth mentioning.

Now for the formula:

- 2 parts Kava
- 2 parts Fresh Valerian root
- 1 part Gotu Kola
- 1 part Passionflower
- 1 part Skullcap
- 1 part Lobelia

You put those together in a jar and cover the herbs with 100 proof vodka. Make sure that the alcohol is about 1/2 inch above herbs.

The reason I use vodka instead of other alcohols is that it is the most pure (without anything added). I use the 100 proof because it has the best of both worlds meaning it has 50% water to extract the constituents that extract best from water and 50% alcohol to take out the constituents that extract best from alcohol.

If you don't want to use alcohol for one reason or another you can use 4 oz dry herb, 16 oz water and 11 oz vegetable glycerin combine in a jar. Then you follow the same directions. I have made this formula this way before and given it to children. It works great!

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Let the jar macerate (let it sit) for two weeks. Shake the jar around at least a few times a day. After two weeks strain off herbs with a muslin cloth or cheese cloth. You can find muslin anywhere fabric is sold. Bottle it and label it. Don't forget to label it.

Now you might want an explanation. Okay, let's explain. Kava is a great muscle relaxant. Imagine the feeling after having a nice massage. Yeah, that's what it's like. For that reason it is also a good stress/anxiety reliever. Since many times stress and anxiety are the causes of insomnia we add the Kava.

Valerian is a nerve soother. It soothes and relaxes the nerves. If you have ever felt that your nerves are frayed then you know how Valerian will help in this situation. It helps with stress, insomnia, and nervous tension. It is important to use fresh Valerian. The dry stuff will calm the nerves but won't put you to sleep. Fresh Valerian will put you out. If you don't have fresh Valerian at your disposal you can go get some fresh Valerian extract from the herb shop under the Herb Pharm brand. Add it at the end of the process by adding 2 parts liquid Valerian extract to 6 parts of the combined formula before bottling. As a side note, if Valerian excites you instead of relaxes you then you have an adrenal problem and need to take Licorice root for awhile before starting back on the Valerian.

The next one is Gotu Kola. The odd thing is that this herb is used in many energy formulas and I'll tell you why. It oxygenates the brain. It doesn't, however, excite the brain. Feeding the brain is always good. Gotu Kola pushes the other herbs to the brain area. It also feeds the entire Endocrine system. This means the Pineal Gland too, which makes melatonin. Melatonin helps regulate the sleep cycles of life and is important in alleviating insomnia.

Passionflower is another nerve calming and relaxing herb. Why did I add it? It has been long known for helping in insomnia, as a nerve relaxant, and as an anti-depressant. It is wonderful herb to compliment the others in this recipe. I use the passion flower leaf in the cut/sifted form. You can usually find it this way. If you cannot find it this way you can use the powder. I measure all my herbs by weight anyways so it shouldn't matter in what form it comes. You just need to make sure you strain all the powder out of the tincture before bottling. This could be a little more difficult, but still possible.

Skullcap feeds the nerves. It helps them rebuild. This is important because although herbs are safe I don't want to have anyone need to be taking anything for a long period of time. The Skullcap will heal the frayed nerves and hopefully result in ending the regimen.

Lobelia speaks for itself. I find it very important as an herbalist to include Lobelia in many of my formulas. Call me old fashioned but I believe Lobelia to be the thinking herb. It helps the other herbs go where they need to go. Lobelia is also an anti-spasmodic. It is a physical relaxant, and can serve as a nerve depressant, easing tension and panic.

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It is important to love what you are doing in life. Enjoy making herbal preparations. Be enthused about taking responsibility for your health. You can do it. Insomnia can be a frustrating thing to deal with, but with a little patience and some changes in your rituals you will be able to alleviate yourself from its grasp.

The dosage would be 1 dropperful about 15 min. before going to bed.

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