

# FOOD AND SLEEP CONNECTION GUIDE



NUTRITION FOR SERENE NIGHTS

# **The Food & Sleep Connection Guide**

**Blood Sugar Stability for Better 3AM Sleep (Perimenopause Edition)**

## **Why Food Timing Matters at 3AM**

Many women don't realize that the "hungry wired" 3AM wake-up is often a blood sugar event.

When blood glucose dips overnight, your body releases rescue hormones (cortisol, adrenaline) to bring it back up. That rescue can wake you—fully alert, restless, sometimes hungry.

This guide helps you stabilize overnight blood sugar through strategic dinner composition and timing.

## DINNER TIMING FRAMEWORK

Ideal Window: 2-3 hours before bed  
(Allows digestion to complete, prevents both hunger dips and digestive disruption)

Examples:

- Bedtime 10pm → Dinner by 7-8pm
- Bedtime 11pm → Dinner by 8-9pm
- Bedtime 9pm → Dinner by 6-7pm

Too Early Warning:

If dinner is 4+ hours before bed, consider a small strategic snack 1 hour before bed.

Too Late Warning:

If dinner is <90 min before bed, digestion competes with sleep onset.

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# DINNER COMPOSITION FORMULA

The "Stable Night" Plate:

1. PROTEIN (Palm-sized portion)

Why: Slows glucose release, supports overnight repair

Examples: chicken, fish, turkey, eggs, tofu, tempeh, legumes

2. FIBER-RICH CARBS (Fist-sized portion)

Why: Sustained energy without spike/crash

Examples: sweet potato, quinoa, brown rice, whole grain pasta, beans

3. HEALTHY FATS (Thumb-sized portion)

Why: Further slows digestion, promotes satiety

Examples: avocado, olive oil, nuts, seeds, fatty fish

4. VEGETABLES (2 fists)

Why: Fiber, nutrients, satiety without blood sugar impact

Examples: leafy greens, broccoli, peppers, zucchini, Brussels sprouts

## AVOID AT DINNER (Common 3AM Triggers):

- ✗ High-sugar desserts (spike → crash pattern)
- ✗ Alcohol in excess (disrupts glucose regulation + heat trigger)
- ✗ Very spicy foods (heat trigger for some women)
- ✗ Large, heavy meals (digestive burden)
- ✗ Simple carbs alone (pasta with no protein/fat = blood sugar roller coaster)

# THE STRATEGIC PRE-BED SNACK (If Needed)

When to Use:

- Dinner was >3 hours ago
- You feel empty/unsettled before bed
- History of waking hungry at 3AM
- Very active day (higher calorie needs)

Smart Snack Formula: Protein + Fat + Small Carb  
(Sustained release, no spike)

BEST OPTIONS (1 hour before bed):

- ✓ Small handful of nuts (almonds, walnuts) + 2-3 dates
- ✓ Greek yogurt (plain) + berries + drizzle of honey
- ✓ Apple slices + almond butter (1 tbsp)
- ✓ Hard-boiled egg + small piece of whole grain toast
- ✓ Cottage cheese + cucumber slices
- ✓ Hummus + veggie sticks + 2-3 whole grain crackers
- ✓ Banana + peanut butter (1 tbsp)
- ✓ Small protein smoothie (protein powder + almond milk + frozen berries)

AVOID:

- ✗ Ice cream, cookies, candy (sugar spike)
- ✗ Large portions (digestive burden)
- ✗ Spicy snacks (potential heat trigger)
- ✗ Caffeine (even chocolate for sensitive women)
- ✗ Alcohol (even a nightcap disrupts sleep architecture)

Size Matters: Keep it small (150-200 calories max)

## Your Personal Food-Sleep Tracker

Track for 7 nights to identify your personal patterns:

Day	Dinner Time & Content	Snack? (Y/N + what)	3AM Wake? (Y/N)	Notes
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				

# Your Food-Sleep Action Plan

Based on your tracking, answer:

1. My ideal dinner time: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Foods that seem to trigger 3AM wakes:  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. My "Stable Night" dinner template:

Protein: \_\_\_\_\_

Carb: \_\_\_\_\_

Fat: \_\_\_\_\_

Veggies: \_\_\_\_\_

4. Do I need a pre-bed snack? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Sometimes

5. My go-to strategic snack (if needed):  
\_\_\_\_\_

6. One food rule I'll commit to for 14 nights:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Remember: You're not pursuing perfect nutrition.  
You're pursuing stable overnight blood sugar to  
reduce 3AM disruptions.



