

Are there any other effects?

Melatonin is likely safe when taken for a short time. It can cause some side effects including headaches, short-term feelings of low mood, daytime sleepiness, dizziness, stomach cramps, and irritability.

Melatonin may increase blood pressure or blood sugar levels in people who already suffer from these conditions. Melatonin can make conditions like asthma or seizures worse.

Other rare side effects include confusion, feeling sick, increased heart rate, and itchy skin.

There is not yet enough research available about long-term side effects. Melatonin is commonly prescribed to children and is considered to be safe.

However, if you notice any of these symptoms, you should let your parents and doctor know immediately.

Please refer to the manufacturer's patient information leaflet that comes with your medicine for more information and the full list of side effects and precautions.

If you have any questions or concerns, talk to your doctor, pharmacist, or other healthcare professional.

Patient advice and liaison service (PALS)

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern please contact our PALS team on 020 7288 5551 or whh-tr.whitthealthPALS@nhs.net

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Melatonin

A guide for adolescents



What is it for?

Melatonin is a hormone found naturally in the body. People use melatonin to adjust the body's internal clock. It is used for jet lag, for adjusting sleep-wake cycles in people whose daily work schedule changes (shift-work disorder), and for helping blind people establish a day and night cycle. Melatonin is also used for the inability to fall asleep (insomnia).

What will Melatonin do?

Melatonin's main job in the body is to regulate sleep-wake cycles. Darkness causes the body to produce more melatonin, which signals the body to prepare for sleep. Light decreases melatonin production and signals the body to prepare for being awake. Some people who have trouble sleeping have low levels of melatonin. It is thought that adding melatonin from supplements might help them sleep. Children who take melatonin to aid their sleep manage to fall asleep earlier and sleep for longer.

How and when should I take Melatonin?

You should take your melatonin as prescribed by your doctor, usually half an hour before bedtime.



When can I stop taking Melatonin?

Melatonin is a short-term treatment and is likely to stop working if you continue to take it for longer than a few weeks. Sometimes your doctor may suggest taking a break from melatonin for a few days or change the dose, and this may help make it work again.

What if I miss a dose?

If you miss a dose then take the next dose as usual the following day, but do not take two doses in the same day.

What if I take more than I should?

You should immediately tell your parents or someone who can help you and go to your local A&E to be checked.

Can I drink alcohol or take drugs when taking Melatonin?

You should avoid alcohol or illicit drugs when you are taking Melatonin because this will stop you from getting better. Also having alcohol with Melatonin may make you feel very drowsy, and this may cause falls or accidents.



What about other medication?

It is OK to take Paracetamol with Melatonin, but if you are taking other kinds of medication every day you need to let your doctor know, as they may interact with Melatonin and change its effect on your body.