

**Mayo Clinic Minute: What to consider before using melatonin supplements for sleep**

Video	Audio
	"Most of the times, melatonin is actually misused because it's used as a general sleep aid and to help with insomnia."
<p><b>Naima Covassin, Ph.D.</b>  <b>Cardiovascular Disease</b>  <b>Mayo Clinic</b></p>	"When you look at the actual clinical evidence, the clinical efficacy of the use of melatonin supplement against insomnia, there is actually very weak evidence."
	Dr. Naima Covassin says melatonin is not a sleep promoter. It's a circadian rhythm regulator that can help "reset our clocks" when sleep is difficult due to circadian disruption from things like shift work, jet lag or disorders that interfere with the time of sleep.
	Not only are more people using melatonin supplements, they're taking higher doses than the typically recommended maximum dose of 5 or fewer milligrams.
	"Higher doses are not necessarily more effective, and actually can be counterproductive because they can have opposite effect."
	"They may end up making you sleepy during the day, when you don't want to be sleeping, and also they increase the risk of adverse effects, as well."
	Serious side effects include worsening of seizures; changes in heart rate and blood pressure; decrease in glucose tolerance; and possible drug interactions for people taking medications for seizure disorders, antidepressants and blood thinners.
	"Because something is "natural" or a product is sold over the counter doesn't mean it's harmless."
	That's why Dr. Covassin's best recommendation is to talk with your provider.
	"Discuss with their physician why they're taking it or if they are considering taking it. So whether it's actually the best course of action for them."
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I'm DeeDee Stiepan.

