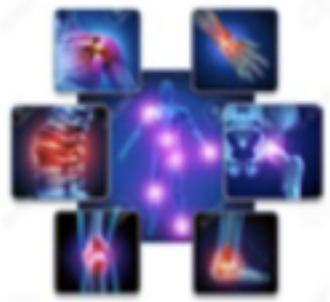
Why do I have more pain at night?



Know Your Joints

Muscle and Joint Care Suggestions

SUMMARY: Why do I have pain at night is a question that I get often. I personally notice things that I did not notice during the day at night. I simply tell people they are not aware of the pain during the day because your nervous system is busy doing other things; the pain during the day is being overshadowed. It is not as much that the pain is worse at night, but rather that the perception of pain is more pronounced at night I suggest, or the pain thresholds are lower at night, says rheumatologists. That may be the case, but there is a lot more to the story. Read on for more details.

Why Do I Have Pain at Night? Not an exact answer.

Why do I have pain at night is a question that I get often. I personally notice things that I did not notice during the day at night. I simply tell people they are not aware of the pain during the day because their nervous system is busy doing other things; the pain during the day is being overshadowed. It is not as much that the pain is worse at night, but rather that the perception of pain is more pronounced at night, or the pain thresholds are lower at night, says rheumatologists. That may be the case, but there is more to the story. When it comes to your joints they tend to distend at night taking on fluid, which make make them more sensitive. That is one of the reasons you are stiff in the morning. When you lay down, the weight of your body may put pressure on your nerves in ways that it doesn't when you're upright. This is particularly common with sciatica and other chronic pain caused by pinched or compressed nerves. According to WebMed research studies show that sleep deprivation causes increased production of inflammatory chemicals in the body called cytokines, which may add to the pain. It can wake people up and/or keep them awake, which prevents restoration that sleep provides. Additionally, the body releases higher levels of melatonin and prolactin at night, both of which can cause an increase in inflammatory cytokines. On the other hand cortisol levels (which has anti-inflammatory effects) drop through the first half of your sleep cycle to let you rest, potentially making pain worse. If pain wakes you up, you may spend too much time in light sleep preventing deep restorative sleep where there is rapid eye movement (REM), which may increase sensitivity to pain during the day. So a viscous cycle starts where pain keeps you up and the lack of restorative sleep heightens your pain during the day, which spills into the next night. Studies supports this for they have found that healthy people are more sensitive to pain during the day when they are low on rest. According to healthline.com research is showing that sensitivity to pain and pain conditions follow a 24-hour — or circadian — rhythm — so pain does change as the day goes on. A person's arthritis inflammation and pain may worsen if: they are already in pain when they go to bed, their mattress or pillow puts pressure on their joints and irritates their arthritis, they have other risk factors for insomnia, such as high stress levels or drinking caffeine before bed. Unfortunately, some of the medications prescribed for pain, such as codeine and morphine, can cause insomnia, which may make the pain worse in the long run. WebMed suggest that people with pain and sleep problems should undergo a diagnostic sleep study. WebMed and other authorities suggest calming yourself with meditation and other relaxation techniques, such as yoga, massage, and tai chi. Regular exercise can improve both pain and sleep issues, but not right before bed. Go light with the exercise at first and choose the right type like walking, swimming, or biking to start. It is also important to practice better sleep hygiene (see sidebar).

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Additional tips for improving sleep from WebMed include:

- Forgo daytime naps or limit yourself to a brief 10- to 20-minute nap in the afternoon.
- Take a warm bath or shower before bed to wind down.
- Lull yourself to sleep with relaxation CDs that play a babbling brook, gentle waves, or other soothing sounds.
- Remove all light-producing appliances from your bedroom, including the TV; if you must have them, choose ones that emit red rather than blue light.
- Abstain from alcohol in the evening; it may help you fall asleep, but the effects of a cocktail quickly backfire, disrupting sleep cycles a few hours into the night.
- Run a fan or other non-specific white noise machine in your bedroom to dampen street or other sounds.
- Avoid caffeine, which disrupts sleep patterns; if you must have a caffeine boost, enjoy it before noon.
- Do not exercise or eat within three hours of going to bed. (See more here)