

**Please Take One!**



## **SUPPLEMENT OF THE MONTH: Melatonin**

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### **What is melatonin and where is it found?**

Melatonin is a hormone produced by the brain, which controls sleep and wake cycles. It can be found in very small amounts in some foods such as meats, grains, fruits, and vegetables. It is also sold as a dietary supplement.

### **What are the benefits?**

Melatonin is used as a sleep aid to treat insomnia and jet lag. It is also used to treat shift-work disorder, circadian rhythm disorders in the blind, and nicotine withdrawal, seasonal affective disorder (SAD) and decreasing cluster headaches. Some people use it for Alzheimer's disease, fibromyalgia, irritable bowel syndrome, epilepsy, some cancers, and neuropathy.

### **Are there interactions with food, medications or herbal supplement?**

Melatonin may decrease blood pressure, so it should not be taken with hypotensive supplements or medications. It should also not be taken with anticoagulant/antiplatelet supplements or medications because melatonin may increase the risk of bleeding in some people. There are also possible interactions with caffeine, St. John's Wort, sedative medications and herbs, anticonvulsants, Echinacea, and vitamin B12.

### **Are there side effects?**

Melatonin is well tolerated but may cause daytime drowsiness, headaches, and dizziness. Before taking melatonin, consult a healthcare provider if you have diabetes, depression, high or low blood pressure, epilepsy/seizure disorder, a bleeding or blood clotting disorder or if you are using any medicine to prevent organ transplant rejection.