



Skeehchoosh

Pequot for Grasses, Herbs, Medicines

PEQUOT PHARMACEUTICAL NETWORK • PHARMACY NEWSLETTER

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Melatonin

Melatonin is a hormone synthesized in the pineal gland and its production is influenced by day/night cycles. Melatonin has a primary role in the regulation of the body's circadian rhythm, endocrine secretions, and sleep patterns.

❖ What are some **common uses** of melatonin in adults?

Insomnia - Melatonin provides a small improvement in sleep quality, reduces sleep latency (the time it takes to fall asleep) by a mean of ten minutes and increases total sleep time by about eight minutes. Melatonin is likely effective for circadian rhythm sleep disorders (blind patients) and delayed sleep phase syndrome.

Jet lag - To prevent daytime sleepiness and fatigue, travelers going eastward through two or more (especially five or more) time zones can take melatonin at the local bedtime on the day of arrival and for two to five nights thereafter.

❖ What are some **adverse effects** of melatonin?

The most common adverse effects (headache, pharyngitis, arthralgia, back pain) occur at a rate similar to placebo. Uncommon adverse effects include dizziness, sleepiness, irritability, anxiety, abdominal pain, and nausea. Rare adverse effects include depression, loss of consciousness, attention or memory impairment, and lab abnormalities.

❖ Is melatonin safe for the **elderly**?

Melatonin levels decline with age, so use in the elderly may make sense. Low doses are recommended for the elderly to mimic physiologic levels. Melatonin may be safer than prescription options, but sleep hygiene should be tried first.

❖ Is melatonin safe and effective for **children**?

Melatonin has been studied for insomnia in children as young as two years of age with special needs. For chronic sleep onset insomnia in children six years and older, melatonin is possibly effective. The most common adverse effects were fatigue, aggression, abnormal dreams, and headache. Consider reserving melatonin for sleep disorders in children most likely to benefit (i.e., problems with sleep onset in patients with delayed sleep phase syndrome, blindness, and perhaps autism, ADHD, and developmental disorders).

❖ How is melatonin usually **dosed**?

Children (max daily dose): 1 mg in infants >6 months; 3 mg in children <40 kg; 5 mg in adolescents >40 kg. Some children may only need 0.5 mg.

Adults (insomnia): 2 to 6 mg per day. When used as a sedative, melatonin is taken 30 to 60 minutes before bedtime.

❖ Should you choose **immediate-release** or **sustained-release melatonin**?

Immediate-release products are recommended because they mimic circadian release and:

- for jet lag, immediate-release may work better due to higher peak.
- melatonin has not been proven to improve sleep maintenance, so sustained-release products don't make sense.



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<https://pharmacist.therapeuticresearch.com/Content/Segments/PRL/2022/Mar/Considerations-for-use-of-Melatonin-S2203001>