

The Scent that Helps Us Sleep

Insomnia, feelings of restlessness and irritability are widespread symptoms that negatively impact our quality of life. But there's an alternative to sleeping pills and sedatives, say German researchers. At Ruhr-Universität-Bochum, they have discovered that a nose full of jasmine scent is as effective in soothing, relieving anxiety and promoting sleep as the most commonly prescribed medications.

In their study, the researchers worked with mice that inhaled jasmine scent released into their Plexiglas cage, and then ceased all motion and sat quietly in a corner. The researchers explained that the calming scent molecules proceed from the lungs into the blood, and then are transmitted to the brain, where they affect neurons responsible for the sleep-wake cycle.

When the mice were injected with a chemical variation of jasmine, the results were similar. In working to balance neurotransmitters in the brain, the researchers suggest that the scent of jasmine acts as strongly as a range of today's psychotropic drugs.

Remarks Bochum cell physiologist and smell researcher Hanns Hatt, "The results can also be seen as evidence of a scientific basis for aromatherapy."



Mushrooms for Health

A new Agricultural Research Service study reports that mushrooms may play an important role in maintaining health. Researchers found that white button mushrooms may promote immune function by increasing production of antiviral and other proteins that are released by cells seeking to protect and repair tissue.

Source: United States Department of Agriculture

Rethinking Calcium Supplements

New research warns that calcium supplements can be associated with a 30 percent increased risk of heart attacks. The findings were consistent across trials and were independent of the age and sex of those researched, as well as the type of supplement. The researchers stress that these findings only pertain to calcium supplements, and not to higher dietary intake through calcium-rich foods.

Source: British Medical Journal, 2010



BRAIN FUNCTION LESSENS WITH OBESITY



New research from Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine confirms that being overweight adversely affects the brain function of older women in terms of their memory, reasoning and other mental skills. The surprise is that the effect appears to be even more pronounced in women who carry excess weight around their hips, known as pear shapes, than those who carry it around their waists, called apple shapes.

Time you
enjoy wasting,
was not wasted.

~ John Lennon

