

# can't sleep? these aromas can help

*Try these sleep-boosting essential oils for sound sleep (and better skin)!*



Sleep is crucial to our skin's ability to repair and regenerate. But what do you do when you just can't relax? This might sound surprising – but soothing scents can make a big difference! **Certain smells have the power to calm our nervous systems, helping us fall asleep faster and stay asleep longer.**

Here's how it works: When we inhale, odor molecules cling to neurons in our nasal passages that send impulses to the brain's olfactory bulb. Your olfactory bulb connects to two areas responsible for emotion and memory: The amygdala and the hippocampus. (Interestingly, the amygdala and hippocampus deal with none of the five senses except smell, which probably explains smell's strong connection to how we feel.)

All of this takes place in the brain's limbic system, which influences the nervous system – which needs to relax before we can. Cue the relaxing powers of three essential oils known for improving sleep – and even creating happier dreams! You can use an aromatherapy diffuser to distribute them throughout your space, dilute and dab them on your neck or pillowcase, or try Dermalogica's **Sound Sleep Cocoon™**, which includes motion-activated essential oils that gradually release as you toss and turn to give you a great night's sleep.



**Lavender** – In one study, participants who slept in Lavender-infused rooms ranked their sleep as 20% better than participants who'd slept in rooms scented with sweet almond oil. In folklore, Lavender-filled pillows helped insomniacs sleep soundly. Take a page from those books and give this floral favorite a try.



**Patchouli** – Popularized in the 1960s, Patchouli has a new set of followers today: Those who swear by it as a natural sleep aid. Patchouli's natural chemicals increase production of neurotransmitters including serotonin and dopamine, known to ease anxiety and stress, as well as hormones that regulate sleep cycles. Its sedative powers can also keep you from waking up throughout the night.



**Sandalwood** – The Sandalwood tree's rich, long-lasting fragrance is a popular one, found in perfumes, soaps and flavorings. Sandalwood Oil's anxiety-reducing qualities make it a potent sleep remedy, with an added bonus: Its aroma relaxes cramped muscles, giving you one less reason to toss and turn.