

Herbal Remedies For Insomnia

McKenzie Pediatrics
(February 2002)

While we cannot recommend any single herbal therapy for insomnia in children and adolescents, the following is a list of herbal remedies that have been studied in children in Europe and are included on the American FDA's list of "Generally Regarded As Safe".

Chamomile:

- Tea: 5 ounces boiling water over 3 grams of fresh flower heads, steeped 5-10 minutes (beware allergic reactions if child with known allergy to ragweed)

Hops:

- Tea: 1 cup boiling water over $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 gram dried strobiles, steeped 5-10 minutes (avoid using if on any central nervous system depressant)

Kava: (a.k.a. Kava Kava)

- By Mouth: 60-120 milligrams of kava lactones from dried root or rhizome (beware that toxic in large doses)

Lavender:

- Tea: 12 ounces boiling water over $1\frac{1}{2}$ grams of dried flowers, steeped 5-10 minutes (beware that toxic in large doses)

Lemon Balm:

- By Mouth: $1\frac{1}{2}$ - $4\frac{1}{2}$ grams per day of dried herb
- Tea: 1 cup boiling water over 2-3 grams of dried herb, steeped 5-10 minutes

Melatonin:

- By Mouth: 1-5 milligrams at bedtime only; avoid if history of seizures or other neurologic disease

Passionflower:

- Tea: 1 teaspoon of crushed flowers per 1 cup of boiling water, steeped 5-10 minutes

Valerian:

- Tea: 1 cup boiling water over 2-3 grams of fresh or dried root, steeped 5-10 minutes

Avoid any tincture or liquid extract form of these herbal remedies in children, as they are usually mixed with high concentrations of alcohol! Thank you.