

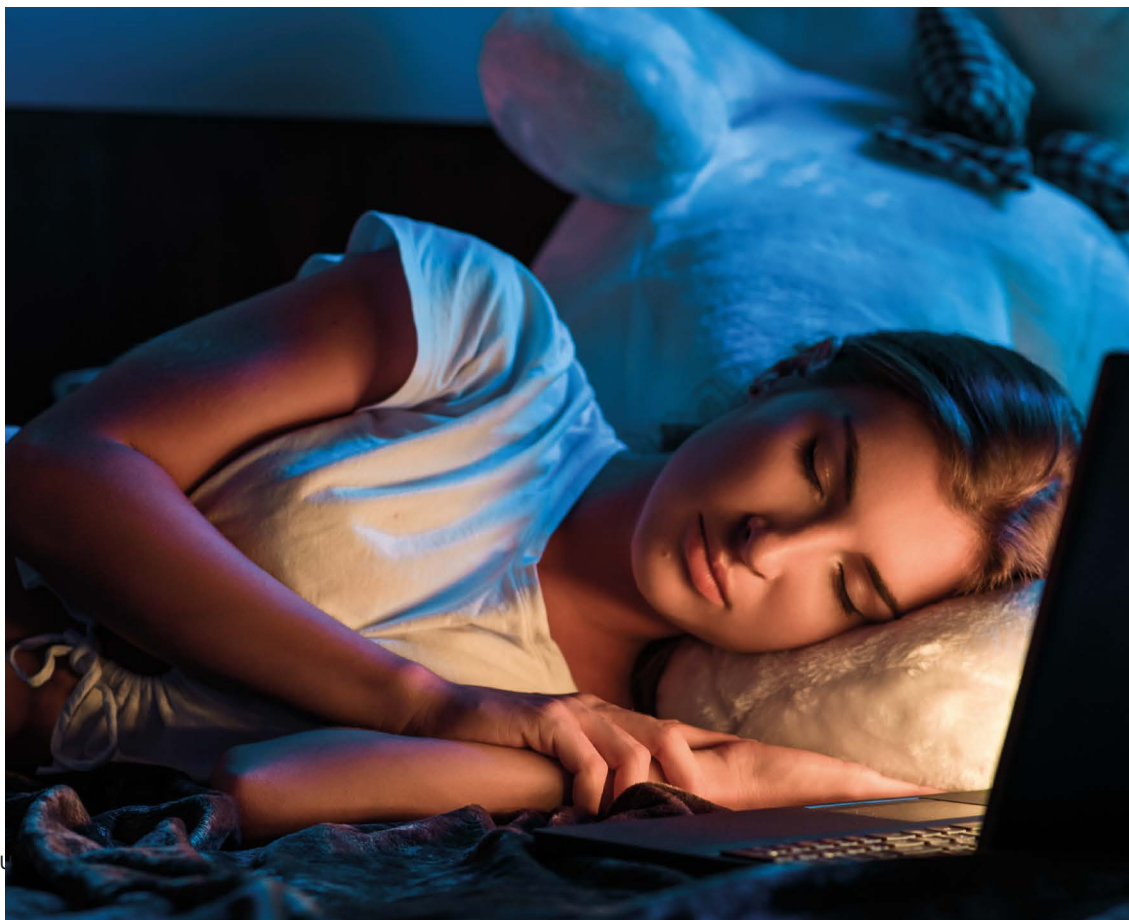
# TOTAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER



**DR. MIA HOLM**

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Dr. Mia Holm obtained her PhD in Public Health with specialization in Community Health Education. Prior to returning to HKAH—SR, Dr. Holm held teaching and management positions at the School of Public Health, HKU and CUHK, respectively.



## Circadian rhythms, melatonin *and a good night sleep*

Everybody knows having a good night sleep is important. The cumulative long-term effects of sleep loss is associated with an increased risk of developing diabetes, heart disease, obesity, stroke, depression, dementia and weakened immunity.

Melatonin is a hormone produced by our brain in response to darkness. It helps with the timing of the circadian rhythms (24-hour internal clock) and with sleep. It is important to let our brain know the clear distinction between day and night. During day time we should allow our eyes to be in direct contact with sunlight (especially early morning sun). Photoreceptors in retina, with connections directly to the hypothalamus region in the brain where our circadian rhythm is regulated. I'm not saying to look at bright sun directly (anything that is painful is a NO!) Direct light exposure meaning not through any glasses (windows) and sunglasses. Exercise during day time in the outdoor not only helps our body make vitamin D but also it is good for keeping our circadian rhythms healthy.

Being exposed to light at night can block melatonin production. In the evening, we should limit our exposure to artificial bright overhead fluorescent light. Soft dim low light is ideal, so that our brain knows it is now evening and will start to produce melatonin. A few hours before going to bed, it's best not to watch TV, look at screens and smartphones because they emit blue light which can confuse our brains that it's still day time. Blue light suppress our melatonin production. You can download apps to lower blue light from your phone, or wear a blue light blocking glasses.

Some people take melatonin supplement as a sleeping aid. Short term use during travelling for jetlag is fine, but long term use is not recommended. Children should not take melatonin. Melatonin is a hormone, so a primary concern is that persistent use could delay puberty or cause premature sexual development in children.



## Vegan Chickpea and Spinach Curry

### Ingredients:

1 can chickpeas, drained and rinsed  
1 onion, chopped  
2 garlic cloves, minced  
1 tablespoon ginger, grated  
1 teaspoon cumin  
1 teaspoon coriander  
1 teaspoon turmeric  
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon  
1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1 can diced tomatoes  
1 cup vegetable broth  
1 bunch spinach, chopped  
Salt to taste  
Brown rice or quinoa, cooked (optional)

### Instructions:

- In a large pot, sauté the onion and garlic in a bit of water or vegetable broth until softened.
- Add the ginger and spices and cook for another minute or two.
- Add the chickpeas, diced tomatoes, and vegetable broth. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
- Add the spinach and cook until wilted, about 5-10 minutes.
- Season with salt to taste.
- Serve over brown rice or quinoa, if desired.

This recipe includes chickpeas, which are a good source of tryptophan, an amino acid that helps to produce melatonin. It also includes spinach, which contains magnesium and folate, two nutrients that can support healthy sleep patterns. Additionally, the warming spices in this curry, such as cinnamon and turmeric, can help to promote relaxation and support healthy circadian rhythms.

## OUR *Prayer Room* AND *Worship* SERVICE



Caring for the whole person—body, mind and spirit — is an integral part of our hospital's approach to health care. Hong Kong Adventist Hospital takes every effort to look after your spiritual and emotional needs.

We have a prayer room which is located on the ground floor opposite to the entrance. It is opened to people of all faiths.

Our clinically trained chaplains are available 24-hours a day, seven days a week to offer guidance and counseling. For those who request, prayers are offered for the patients and their families.

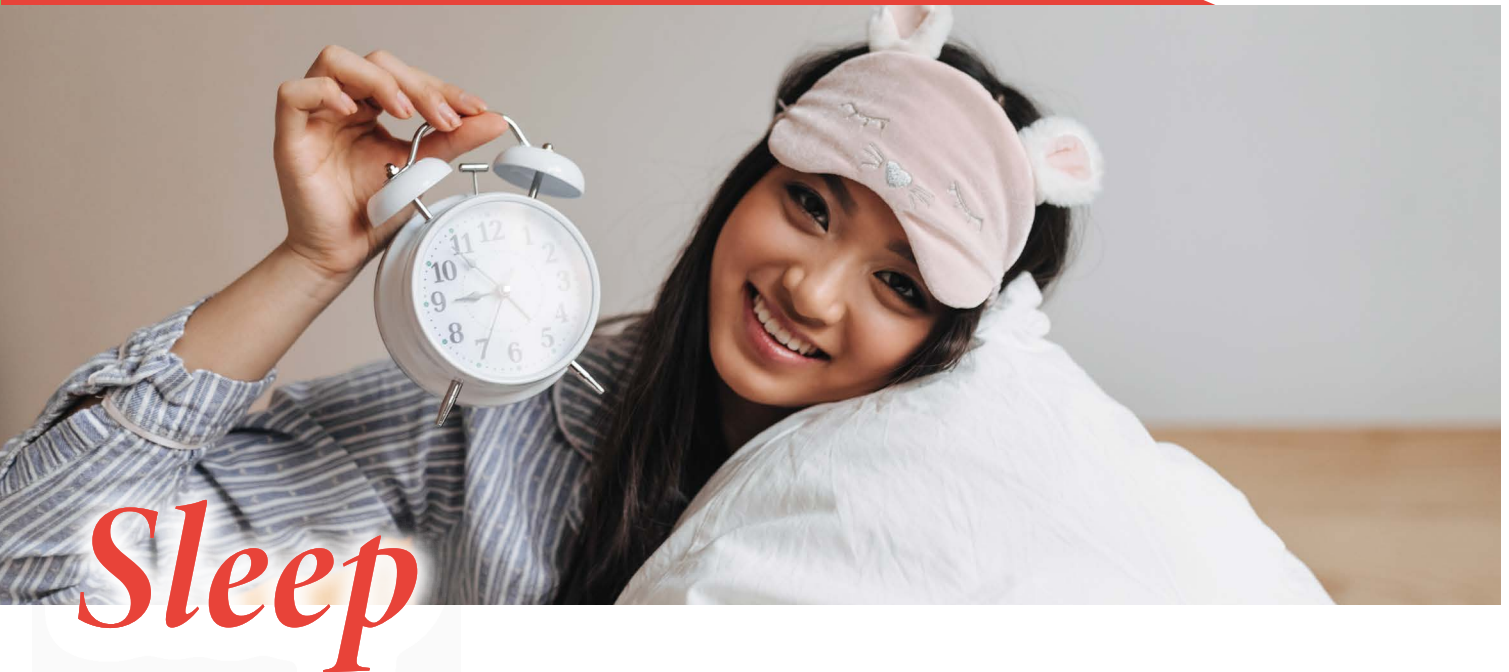
Regardless of religious affiliation or the lack thereof, our chaplains are ready to offer spiritual and emotional support during your stay at the hospital.

A short inspiring morning message is offered every weekday from 8:40am to 9:00am in La Rue Building 7B. All patients are welcome to attend.

Please feel free to call upon our chaplains for emotional and spiritual support or to just have a listening ear.

May God bless you.

**From the Chaplain's Office**



Sleep, like oxygen, is one of those human necessities that we don't think much about until we don't have it. The lack of sleep makes the wealthiest man poor, and the happiest man miserable.

Sleep is closely correlated to our overall health. It affects every aspect of our lives, and moves in a rather humorous cycle. When we are babies, we sleep all the time, then as we become toddlers and little children, we hate sleep, and we resist it. However, when we become teenagers, we need more sleep again, then as young adults we are too busy to sleep, but as we age, it becomes increasingly necessary. Eventually even when we don't want to, we fall asleep.

The topic of sleep it's prominently featured in the Bible. As a matter of fact, the Bible compares death to a deep sleep. Furthermore, the Bible speaks of the futility of life when we are not able to sleep, and it also points to the blessings of being able to peacefully lay down and get a full restful sleep.

The Covid-19 pandemic uncovered another epidemic that for many years, was very real for millions of people: the inability to sleep.

Conventional wisdom dictates that most people need about eight hours of sleep every night in order to function properly. However the hard-core reality for millions of people, both young and old, is that they are not able to achieve a full night of sleep. This in turn has produced a gigantic sleep industry, that's shamelessly profits from their insomniac misfortunes.

In the United States specifically, TV commercials about sleeping pills bombard consumers on a daily basis, making the names of sleep-aid medications so well-known, that it seems as if they are plastered in the minds of millions of Americans, infamously coining the deceptive phrase "non-habit forming".

Where are you in the sleeping scale? Are you a person that is not able to sleep, or if you're able to sleep or you're not able to have a good quality of sleep? While it may be easier and faster to run to the doctor to get a prescription, there are many other ways in which a person can achieve quality of sleep.

One of them is to be at peace with the God. A peaceful clean conscience it's a very good pillow. One of the most beautiful promises in the Bible is found in the book of Isaiah, it tells us God will keep in perfect peace those who trust. Now, that is a kind of peace that produces good quality. King David, the famous monarch of the early Jewish kingdom, knew the importance of sleep, he proclaimed: "In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, LORD, make me dwell in safety" Even science backs up the theory that trusting, and being at peace with God is good for our sleep. Researchers from the University of Texas at San Antonio and the University of Arizona examined population studies from the last 20 years and found consistent evidence that participants who regularly attend religious services reported better sleep quality than their secular counterparts.

In a study published in April (2018) in Sleep Health: Journal of the National Sleep Foundation, the team found people who rated religion as important were likely to sleep at least seven hours uninterrupted and fall asleep easily without medication, while secular respondents reported restlessness and intermittent waking periods and were likely to sleep less for than seven hours. Are you having trouble sleeping? Give God a try, which may just be what you need to have a peaceful, restful sleep.

Psalms 4:8

Isaiah 26:3

<https://www.newsweek.com/more-religious-people-sleep-better-research-says-975245>



**Lifestyle Management Center (LMC)** is a crucial component of Hong Kong Adventist Hospital, articulating its mission, aiming to provide health education to both our patients and the general public regarding the benefits of 'Total Health'.

Through services and programs such as the Lifestyle Medicine Clinic, comprehensive lifestyle assessment, health screenings, delicious vegan cooking demonstration, fitness club and interactive educational programs, participants can begin to restore their own health through lifestyle modification.

Our success depends largely on your participation and support. Let us strive together to promote better holistic health in our society.

DONATE  
TODAY



Hong Kong Adventist Hospital Foundation  
港安醫院慈善基金

Your benevolence not only makes a significant difference to our beneficiaries but also opens doors that they never imagined possible!

**WEBSITE:**  
[www.hkahf.org.hk](http://www.hkahf.org.hk)

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FUTURE



Healthy Lifestyle Fund

Your generosity will contribute to the healthy lifestyle education to the general public through Lifestyle Management Center. It will help our center run health seminars, cooking and fitness classes and health programs in order to educate the public on how to prevent, improve and even reverse chronic diseases.

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