

# Night Terrors

By Rebecca Turner



Lucid Dream Forum

**Night terrors** (also known as **sleep terrors**) are a disturbing sleep disorder which most commonly affects young children but can also occur at times of stress in adults.

The condition can become chronic and is characterized by waking up in the night, screaming in terror and having hallucinations of fearful images like bugs in the bed. This article explores the causes of this sleep disorder and how to stop night terrors without the need for prescription medication.

## What are Night Terrors?

This bizarre sleep disorder goes by many names including: sleep terror disorder, *pavor nocturnus*, and DSM-IV AXIS I:307.46 (that would be the medical name). It shares similarities with Hallucinatory Sleep Disorder (HSD) yet many people go undiagnosed simply because they don't understand what's happening to them.

Not to be confused with bog standard nightmares or even sleep paralysis, night terrors involve waking up suddenly from deep *slow wave sleep* about 15-60 minutes after dozing off. Victims may jump out of bed, experiencing extreme terror and a temporary inability to regain full consciousness.

This is often accompanied by fearsome hallucinations, which vary from person to person. In the past when I experienced night terrors it was always a giant spider that was either walking up the bed or hovering in the air before me.

This instigates the **fight or flight** response - an evolutionary instinct which helps us flee from emergency situations with a rush of adrenaline. The fear is intense, and the sufferer will often scream and shout and be highly motivated to get away. In this half-sleep state, they will not respond well to logical statements ("calm down, it's just a dream") and some people have no memory of the attack whatsoever.

### Night Terrors: The Causes

Night terrors in children are the most common and yet we are not immune to this condition as adults. Research has identified some specific causes such as:

- Physical or emotional stress
- Medications (including sedatives)
- Sleep deprivation
- Stimulants before bed
- Jet lag or time zone changes
- Drug abuse
- Sleeping somewhere new

According to the Night Terrors Resource Center, the longer you are in non-REM sleep before the terror strikes, the greater the fear. It is possible to provoke an episode in a sufferer by merely touching them while in deep, non-REM sleep. In fact, a recent study found that in 81% of cases, physical contact and proximity of a sleeping partner or a pet

on the bed was the trigger for the already predisposed sufferers.

### How to Stop Night Terrors

There are different schools of thought on the best way to stop night terrors in children and adults. Some recommend that you hold and reassure the sufferer when they jump up screaming and shouting, which also prevents them from hurting themselves. However, they may be extremely paranoid and think you're trying to harm them, so if this is their reaction, let them move about freely.

It's also important to stay calm yourself. Don't yell at them because this will make them more anxious and confused. They will already be extremely confused from the sudden adrenaline rush and quite possibly be half-asleep, so be patient and try to bring them back to reality with reassuring words.

Often, my hallucinations lasted no more than five seconds, yet seeing them appear so vividly in my bedroom left an imprint on my mind. It took some convincing before I would finally "wake up" and accept that there was never anything there.

In severe cases, doctors prescribe anti-depressant drugs like Klonopin, Tofranil or Valium. However, there are **natural remedies** available without prescription such as:

- St John's Wort(mainly used for depression, mild anxiety and sleep problems due to its sedative effects - please read up on dosage and interactions here first).
- L-Theanine(mainly used for anxiety, preventing dementia, and treating high blood pressure - again, be sure to read up on L-Theanine before taking it yourself).

If you or your child suffers from sleep terrors, you can try the following relaxation methods to prevent the build up of anxiety which often leads to the attack.

- **Unwind Before Sleep** - Give your child time to unwind at the end of a busy day before sending them to bed. Run them a warm bath, play peaceful music and snuggle up with a book before bed.
- **Cool Down** - Make sure the bedroom is not overly hot in the summer, as this can exacerbate an episode. Leave the window open a crack and give them lightweight pajamas. Avoid PJs with feet.
- **Play Music** - It helps to fall asleep to the sound of soothing music, which aids the transition between each phase of sleep when the parasomnia occurs. It can also create good mental imagery to relax your mind as you fall asleep.
- **Herbal Remedies** - Take a Chamomile capsule an hour before bed. In chronic sufferers, it may take a week to see a reduction in night terrors but this is a

reliable herbal remedy that is less habit-forming than prescription drugs.

- **Essential Oils** - Scents are highly evocative so try a relaxing essential oil like Lavender to calm yourself and ensure the aroma sticks around until morning.

Be especially prepared for night terrors to recur in unusual circumstances such as sleeping while jet lagged or severely sleep deprived, or sleeping in a new location (either the bed has moved, or you're in a different house altogether).

Another way to reduce the stress that causes sleep terrors is to seek out counseling to release any negative anxieties that may be to blame. The night terrors may be linked to phobias or Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) so dealing with the root of the anxiety is a good way to treat this condition that goes bump in the night.

# Natural Remedies



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# Night Terrors in Adults

Michael Jessimy | April 20, 2012 |

Night terrors, also referred to as incubus, sleep terror or pavor nocturnes, is a sleeping disorder that commonly occurs during the first few hours of sleep.



night terrors in adults

These terrors can affect anyone, ranging from infants to adults, but is most common during childhood. There are however, adults who some from chronic night terrors, at least once weekly. The condition should not be confused with nightmares, which often result in deep slow wave sleep, whereas night terrors occur soon following sleep. The affected person will usually sit up straight in bed screaming in terror and panting heavily, with profuse sweating. Upon waking, the person may not exhibit full consciousness, and may also have vivid hallucinations. This condition evokes the autonomic nervous system sharply, so adrenaline is primed to act (fight or flight mode). The person will not normally react to statements or may not even have memory of the occurrence. Persons experiencing chronic night terrors also have a higher risk of associated post-traumatic stress disorder and generalized anxiety disorder. There also appears to be a genetic link and the risk for episodes of night terrors. A first degree relative who has the disorder may include your risk as much as ten times. There is also a possible association of night terrors with persons suffering from insomnia, those who lack an adequate diet, or persons undergoing very stressful life situations.

## Causes of Night Terrors

The exact causes of night terrors are hard to establish, however, there are conditions under which you are more likely to have an attack. Since night terrors occur mainly during non REM (rapid eye movement) sleep, the longer the person

remains in that state the more likely it is for them to have an attack. By simply having contact with the person during that phase of sleep it is possible to induce an attack. Other commonly associated triggers of night terrors include;

- Stress of various types, including mental, physical and emotional fatigue.
- Use of certain medications such as sedatives and anxiolytics
- Lack of sleep
- Use of stimulants before bed
- Use of illicit drugs

### **Treatment of Night Terrors**

The episodes of night terrors generally do not warrant treatment with medications, since they may occur very occasionally, or may not be very extreme. As such, methods to treat night terrors are for the most part natural modifications that you make to your lifestyle. **The following are proven, natural changes that can help you prevent attacks of incubus:**

- Use of essential oils- essential oils elicit a relaxing feel by their smell. They may be used as incense sticks, or scented candles, although sticks are the safer option. Lavender scented varieties seem to work very effectively.
- Play soft music before bed- these types of music help to transition you through each phase of sleep.
- Sleep in a cool room- rooms that are higher in temperature are more likely to precipitate an attack. Leave windows open if possible or install an air conditioning system.
- Allow yourself to relax before bed- a warm bath, and half an hour to relax before going to bed helps you to accomplish more peaceful sleep. Especially important following hectic days
- Herbal remedies- the use of supplements such as St. John's Wort or Chamomile may help to reduce the frequency of night terror attacks.

In severe cases, your doctor may recommend prescription strength anti-depressants or anti-anxiety medications to help you prevent these episodes. Always consult your doctor if these episodes become chronic.



# Attacks of Pavor Nocturnus (a.k.a. Sleep Terrors, Night Terrors, Incubus Attacks) Are They Affecting You or Your Children?

Written by [Anthony Degani](#) and [Kevin Morton](#) with contributions from the *Stanford Sleep Book*, Winter 2010

## What's In A Name?

Pavor nocturnus, sleep terror, night terror, incubus attack? Why so many names??

Well, "pavor nocturnus" is literally Latin for "sleep terror"—so those phrases are just saying the exact same thing in two separate languages. In addition, "pavor nocturnus" is used most commonly to refer to sleep terrors in children.

On the other hand, the phrase "incubus attacks" is commonly used to refer to sleep terrors in adults. The word "incubus" (from the Latin *in*: upon, & *cubare*: to press) reflects the medieval belief that sleep terrors are caused by a devil pressing on the chest of the sleeper, although this cause is scientifically yet to be proven ;-)

Since pavor nocturnus episodes also occur during naps, the term "sleep terror" is preferred over "night terror" to be technically correct.

Sleep terrors have also been referred to as nightmares, but don't confuse this with the REM nightmare that you usually think of with this word!

In a characteristic pavor nocturnus (or sleep terror) episode, the sleeper sits up suddenly in bed and screams out in fear. Eyes wide open, pupils dilated, and breathing fast, he or she appears to be in a state of great terror, autonomically awake but clearly distanced. Throughout the episode, communication is difficult (and sometimes downright impossible), and the victim can typically neither be consoled nor comforted. A sleep terror is a common sleep complication that affects both children and adults.

Sleep terrors are a sleep disorder, though often just a temporary one. Since they involve abnormal physical behaviors during sleep they are classified as parasomnia. Episodes typically last several minutes and end rather spontaneously.



### **Dr. D's Sleep Book Says...**

Also known as incubus attacks or pavor nocturna, sleep terrors often involve individuals screaming in the middle of the night, ostensibly in a state of panic. Sleep terrors typically last several minutes and resolve themselves. Attacks are more frequent in children and can occur throughout the lifespan, although they occur less frequently with age.

### **When and Why Do Sleep Terrors Occur?**

Polysomnographic sleep recordings that have captured pavor nocturnus episodes have shown that they mainly occur during arousals from slow wave sleep, which occurs predominantly during the first third of the night. When several sleep terror episodes occur during the course of the same night, they may also occur in NREM stage 2, or even stage 1.

## *Creating A Sleep Terror*

In subjects who are predisposed to episodes, attacks can be elicited experimentally by forced arousal during SWS, suggesting that the transition out of this deep slumber is an important component (albeit not a standalone one) of a sleep terror.

It is not likely for someone to have multiple sleep terrors in one night, as frequent attacks occur in only 3 percent of children and less than 1 percent of adults, but some have reported as much as 40! The majority of people who experience the sleep terror disorder have, on average, one to four episodes per month.

Sleep terrors sometimes run in the family and are associated with increased incidence of sleep walking and confusional arousals in the person affected and/or other family members. Some factors like sleep deprivation (sleep debt), sickness or fevers, and stress can contribute to the triggering of a sleep terror episode, but no one factor acts independently and it is as of now at least a leap of faith to name a specific mechanism that causes sleep terrors.



### **Dr. D's Sleep Book Says...**

In making a correct identification, sleep terrors must be distinguished from nightmares. The latter typically occur in the last (rather than the first) third of the night; they do not

have the same intensity of terror, autonomic arousal, or motor activity; and they are not followed by such intense mental confusion. Moreover, a person who has had a nightmare typically recalls an organized dream in which evolving events became frightening and personally threatening.

## **Sleep Terrors In Adults**

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While psychopathology (mental conditions) in children experiencing pavor nocturnus is very rare, it is commonly associated with sleep terrors in adults. Common associated conditions include anxiety and post-traumatic disorders. That said, sleep terrors themselves are much less common in adults, and this is not to say that having sleep terrors as an adult necessitates any kind of mental condition. (Browsing [our visitor-submitted stories](#) of adult sleep terrors is testament to that.

If present in adulthood, incubus attacks typically are most frequent in the 20- to 30-year-old range and less frequent in old age. Due to the link with psychopathology, it would seem that one would *not* have to have experienced pavor nocturna as a child in order to have sleep terrors as an adult.

Sleep terrors in adults are not normal, and if they are occurring on a frequent basis (more than a few times a week) and/or resulting in injuries to the individual or another, or significant stress, the individual should consult a sleep specialist.

## **Are You Awake During A Sleep Terror Episode?**

While it has been mentioned above that sleep terrors occur mostly during *arousals* from slow wave sleep, these arousals are quite autonomic, meaning that an individual is not fully awake by any means. This, despite the fact that he or she will often have eyes wide open with pupils dilated and will be screaming or talking in a fearful flurry.

In fact, while an episode is going on victims can be almost impossible to wake up to a coherent state or even to comfort, and this can be very hard on most parents. While parents should know that many individuals in a pavor nocturnus episode may respond violently to attempts to help or restrain them, it is understandable of course to console them. Parents may also take solace in the fact that many children will have no recollection at all of their episode when they wake up in the morning.

For some subjects though, once awake they will often remember having difficulty breathing but will very rarely recall detailed mental activity at the time of the episode. Instead, if memory is present of what happened it will often just consist of a static scene like a single photograph, rather than the progressive storyline of images that accompanies a dream.

## **Treatment for Sleep Terrors**

Treatment is often unnecessary when episodes of pavor nocturnus are rare, whether in children or adults. For children,

Dr. Dement's words below should calm the minds of most parents:

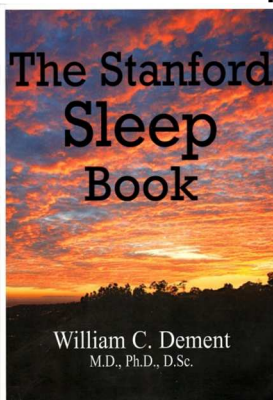


### **Dr. D's Sleep Book Says...**

**Parents of young patients** must be reassured that these dramatic episodes have no psychopathological implications, that they seldom cause injury, and are almost always outgrown.

However, for frequently occurring episodes of sleep terrors, especially those occurring in adults, or for episodes that cause injury or significant anxiety, a sleep specialist should definitely be consulted.

### **Dr. D's Sleep Book**



**New York Times**

**Night Terror Overview**

Night terrors (sleep terrors) are a sleep disorder in which a person quickly wakes from sleep in a terrified state.

Reference from A.D.A.M.

#### **ALTERNATIVE NAMES**

Pavor nocturnus; Sleep terror disorder

#### **CAUSES**

The cause is unknown, but night terrors may be triggered by:

- Fever
- Lack of sleep
- Periods of emotional tension, stress, or conflict
- Night terrors are most common in boys ages 5 - 7, although they also can occur in girls. They are fairly common in children ages 3 - 7, and much less common after that. Night terrors may run in families. They can occur in adults, especially when there is emotional tension or the use of alcohol.

#### **SYMPTOMS**

Night terrors are most common during the first third of the night, often between midnight and 2 a.m.

- Sleepers often scream and are very frightened and confused. They thrash around violently and are often not aware of their surroundings.
- You may be unable to talk to, comfort, or fully wake up a sleeper who is having a night terror.
- The sleeper may be sweating, breathing very fast (hyperventilating), have a fast heart rate, and widened (dilated) pupils.
- The spell may last 10 - 20 minutes, then the sleeper goes back to sleep.
- Most sleepers are unable to explain what happened the next morning. They often have no memory of the event when they wake up the next day.

Sleepers with night terrors may also sleep walk.

In contrast, nightmares are more common in the early morning. They may occur after someone watches frightening movies or TV shows, or has an emotional experience. A person may remember the details of a

dream when he or she wakes up, and will not be disoriented after the episode.

#### **EXAMS AND TESTS**

In many cases, no further examination or testing is needed. If the night terror is severe or prolonged, the child may need a psychological evaluation.

#### **TREATMENT**

In many cases, a person who has a night terror only needs to be comforted.

Reducing stress or using coping mechanisms may reduce night terrors. Talk therapy or counseling may be needed in some cases. Benzodiazepine medicines (such as diazepam) used at bedtime will often reduce night terrors, but are rarely used to treat this disorder.

#### **WHEN TO CONTACT A MEDICAL PROFESSIONAL**

Call for an appointment with your health care provider if:

- The night terrors occur often
- They disrupt sleep on a regular basis
- Other symptoms occur with the night terror
- The night terror causes, or almost causes, injuries

#### **PREVENTION**

Minimizing stress or using coping mechanisms may reduce night terrors.



# Dealing with Adult Night Terrors

Night terrors are often thought of as a child's sleep problem, but they happen to adults too. Understanding the problem is the best way to prevent it from reoccurring.

By: Jessica Reed

Night terrors, also known as sleep terrors, are a type of sleep disorder in which a person wakes suddenly in a terrified and panicked state. The person may sit up or jump out of bed, and often will make noise or scream. The person having the night terror may not remember anything about it when friends or family members mention it to him in the morning.

Often the person seems awake, with his eyes open and mumbling, but is actually only half-conscious. He may feel afraid, confused, or disoriented. Certain people may remember the night terror in the morning and talk about seeing things like snakes or spiders in the room.

## Symptoms of a Night Terror

Each adult may experience a different combination of symptoms when experiencing a night terror. The adult may experience several of the symptoms or only one or two. The first two symptoms, waking abruptly and experiencing fear or panic, are the key signs that indicate a night terror.

- fear or panic
- waking abruptly
- seeing scary visions, such as snakes or spiders
- confused or disoriented
- may or may not remember the episode

- screaming
- jumping out of bed and running around
- doesn't respond to others

## **Difference Between Night Terrors and Sleepwalking**

Sleepwalking may sound like a night terror based on symptoms such as leaving the bed and moving around the house. A sleepwalker, however, is still asleep and is not distressed. A sleepwalker may go back to bed on his own, or if another person leads him there. Typically sleepwalkers are not violent or upset.

A person having a night terror usually bolts out of bed, often screaming, and is in a high state of fear and panic. While the person is hard to wake up, much like a sleepwalker, he also may become aggressive or will continue to scream or thrash around. Adults may remember having a vivid, terrifying dream the next morning when the episode is over.

## **Why Do Adults Have Night Terrors?**

Currently it is uncertain exactly what causes night terrors. Certain factors, however, may increase the likelihood of experiencing one. Suffering from another sleep disorder, a mental disorder, or substance abuse may trigger night terrors. Medications or a family history of night terrors also raise the risk. Night terrors are less common in adults than children, but they do occur and sometimes develop in adults who never experience them as a child.

# **Are Adult Night Terrors Different From Children's Night Terrors?**

While the night terrors are in a sense the same, children and adults react to them differently. Children often have no memory of the event and may sleepwalk or talk in their sleep during an episode. Parents can soothe the child and talk to the child's doctor if the episodes are troublesome. Children typically do not react in violent ways. Many times the night terrors will go away on their own after a period of time. Fever or stress can cause night terrors in children.

Adults may or may not react violently, but often have larger physical reactions and have some memory of the event afterward. Night terrors may come from a number of mental or physical causes and are not as likely to disappear over time. Finding ways to prevent them or talking to a doctor is the best solution for an adult dealing with night terrors.

## **How to Prevent Adult Night Terrors**

Talking to a doctor is important, especially if the night terrors are troublesome, frequent, or violent. A therapist may also help, especially if a mental disorder or a high level of stress is present. Adults who are dealing with night terrors can try the following tips to help control and avoid the episodes:

- reduce as much stress as possible
- practice meditation or yoga before bed
- exercise on a regular basis and eat healthy foods
- get enough sleep each night
- avoid caffeine and sugar before bed
- keep the bedroom clean and sleep with a night light
- listen to relaxing music or white noise during sleep

## **Hope Exists for Those Suffering From Adult Night Terrors**

While there is no cure for night terrors, they can be treated with a number of relaxation techniques and small lifestyle changes. A night terror may go away on its own over time or when the stressful situation triggering it is removed from the person's life. Consulting a doctor or therapist can help not only with night terrors, but to deal with stress, anxiety, or depression. Individuals who have experienced a traumatic situation may have a higher risk of night terrors associated with anxiety disorders or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Therapy can help individuals handle the symptoms of stress, depression, anxiety, or PTSD to overcome adult night terrors.

### **Relaxation Techniques**

Relaxation techniques often can help people with sleep problems get a good night's sleep. Several relaxation techniques are listed below.

### **Progressive Relaxation**

This technique is often most useful when you tape the instructions beforehand. You can tape these instructions, reading them slowly and leaving a short pause after each one or listen to the **progressive muscle relaxation** track on our "Falling Asleep" CD.

<http://umm.edu/programs/sleep/patients/audio>

(Link to free MP3)

- Lie on your back, close your eyes.
- Feel your feet. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and sink into the bed. Start with your toes and progress to your ankles.
- Feel your knees. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your upper legs and thighs. Feel their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your abdomen and chest. Sense your breathing. Consciously will them to relax. Deepen your breathing slightly and feel your abdomen and chest sink into the bed.
- Feel your buttocks. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your hands. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your upper arms. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your shoulders. Sense their weight. Consciously relax them and feel them sink into the bed.
- Feel your neck. Sense its weight. Consciously relax it and feel it sink into the bed.
- Feel your head and skull. Sense its weight. Consciously relax it and feel it sink into the bed.
- Feel your mouth and jaw. Consciously relax them. Pay particular attention to your jaw muscles and unclench them if you need to. Feel your mouth and jaw relax and sink into the bed.
- Feel your eyes. Sense if there is tension in your eyes. Sense if you are forcibly closing your eyelids. Consciously relax your eyelids and feel the tension slide off the eyes.

- Feel your face and cheeks. Consciously relax them and feel the tension slide off into the bed.
- Mentally scan your body. If you find any place that is still tense, then consciously relax that place and let it sink into the bed.

### **Toe Tensing**

This one may seem like a bit of a contradiction to the previous one, but by alternately tensing and relaxing your toes, you actually draw tension from the rest of the body. Try it!

- Lie on your back, close your eyes.
- Sense your toes.
- Now pull all 10 toes back toward your face. Count to 10 slowly.
- Now relax your toes.
- Count to 10 slowly.
- Now repeat the above cycle 10 times.

### **Deep Breathing**

Listen to the **deep breathing track** on our “Falling Asleep” CD  
By concentrating on our breathing, deep breathing allows the rest of our body to relax itself. Deep breathing is a great way to relax the body and get everything into synchrony. Relaxation breathing is an important part of yoga and martial arts for this reason.

- Lie on your back.
- Slowly relax your body. You can use the progressive relaxation technique we described above.
- Begin to inhale slowly through your nose if possible. Fill the lower part of your chest first, then the middle and top part of your chest and lungs. Be sure to do this slowly, over 8 to 10 seconds.
- Hold your breath for a second or two.
- Then quietly and easily relax and let the air out.
- Wait a few seconds and repeat this cycle.
- If you find yourself getting dizzy, then you are overdoing it. Slow down.
- You can also imagine yourself in a peaceful situation such as on a warm, gentle ocean. Imagine that you rise on the gentle swells of the water as you inhale and sink down into the waves as you exhale.
- You can continue this breathing technique for as long as you like until you fall asleep.

## **Guided Imagery**

Listen to the **guided imagery track** on our “Falling Asleep” CD. In this technique, the goal is to visualize yourself in a peaceful setting.

- Lie on your back with your eyes closed.
- Imagine yourself in a favorite, peaceful place. The place may be on a sunny beach with the ocean breezes caressing you, swinging in a hammock in the mountains or in your own backyard. Any place that you find peaceful and relaxing is OK.
- Imagine you are there. See and feel your surroundings, hear the peaceful sounds, smell the flowers or the barbecue, feel the warmth of the sun and any other sensations that you find. Relax and enjoy it.
- You can return to this place any night you need to. As you use this place more and more you will find it easier to fall asleep as this imagery becomes a sleep conditioner.
- Some patients find it useful to visualize something boring. This may be a particularly boring teacher or lecturer, co-worker or friend.

## **Quiet Ears**

Listen to the **quiet ears track** on our “Falling Asleep” CD.

- Lie on your back with your eyes closed.
- Place your hands behind your head. Make sure they are relaxed.
- Place your thumbs in your ears so that you close the ear canal.
- You will hear a high-pitched rushing sound. This is normal.
- Listen to this sound for 10-15 minutes.
- Then put your arms at your sides, actively relax them and go to sleep.

## More Sleep Strategies

### CALMING BEDTIME RITUALS

It's helpful to start your nightly calming ritual with a few relaxation breaths. Takes just a minute and really helps. Here we go...

#### ONE

Take a deep, deep breath through your nose. Deeeeeeep - and slow - and release it slowly through your pursed lips - like blowing a kiss - all the way out...

#### TWO

Once more - another deep, deep breath - in through your nose - count up to 8 - Sit up straight so you can fill your lungs all the way to the bottom - and very slowly, very gently - out through your pursed lips as you count down from 8...

Close your eyes, relax your muscles and allow the tension to leave your body.

#### THREE

And one more deeeeeeep breath - in through your nose - and - blow kiss - out slowly and gently through your pursed lips. And relax your muscles - all over - every muscle - just relaaaaax - like butter - like crusty, old snow melting on a warm, sunny day - from the tip of your head to the tip of your toes.

Feel a bit better? We hope so.

#### A. "THE THREESIES"

Here's a little ritual you can adopt to help you unwind at the end of the day and give yourself a positive closure on the day.

Once you're in bed and ready to go to sleep, remind yourself of 3 blessings you received during the day that you're grateful for, then 3 things you accomplished during the day; and then 3 things you plan to accomplish the next day. This leaves you with a positive feeling about your day and positive goals for the future - both of which are calming and reassuring as you settle down to go to sleep.

If you find three of each too easy, move up to five: 5 blessings, 5 accomplishments, 5 things to do tomorrow. *[I often do this ritual - and frequently find I've fallen asleep in the middle of step 1 - Blessings...*

*Jonella ]*



By the way - The day's "blessings" can be things like: It was gorgeous weather - It DIDN'T rain! - They can be long-term blessings, such as, "I love my house, I'm so glad I have it" - or they can be particular to that day, "Sam called and made me feel so good!..."

#### B. THE LOVELY MEMORY RITUAL

Another pleasant mind game you can do as you lie in bed is to bring to mind a pleasant memory from the past - something very lovely - a wonderful time in your life - a happy relationship - something that brings a smile just remembering it. And as you bring forth the picture of this time, try to fill in the details - the setting, the room - include the furniture and wallpaper, if possible - the cast of characters - what they wore, what was eaten, what was said - just like a mini-screenplay - your own screenplay of a happy time for you. This is a very pleasant way to end the day and lull yourself to sleep.

#### C. YOUR PERFECT SPIRITUAL HOME

I just learned of this and I like it a lot. You get yourself relaxed - (as in Relaxation Breathing - the three long breaths in and out - as above - remember?) - then you conjure up this space that seems absolutely perfect to you - a space created by you in your mind - perhaps a beautiful grove in the woods, or a flower garden, or a cozy room - or someplace literally "out of this world" - in the clouds, say - or wherever it feels "perfect" for your soul to reside. And you bring forth this vision and simply "reside" there for a while - 'til you fall asleep. [ *I love it!* ]

#### D. BEDTIME POETRY

Some people make it a habit to recite poetry from memory as they lie in bed at night. If you can remember some especially lovely poems from the past, these can be a natural, lulling comfort to you because of their rhythmic quality, their pleasant imagery - and also because of the pleasurable memories they perhaps bring back - A great little ritual to employ on a regular basis.

You could also read a poem or two just before turning out the light.

You could try this one, by Henry Vaughn...

#### THE MOTION OF THE SPHERES

I saw eternity the other night

Like a great ring of pure and endless light,

All calm, as it was bright;  
and, round beneath it, time, in hours, days, years,  
Driven by the spheres,  
Like a vast shadow moved, in which the world  
And all her train were hurled.

## Natural Remedy:



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Price– \$37.76

[http://www.yogaaccessories.com/Bad-Dream-Sprinkles-to-Comfort-Night-Terrors-and-Bad-Dreams-20g\\_p\\_124080.html](http://www.yogaaccessories.com/Bad-Dream-Sprinkles-to-Comfort-Night-Terrors-and-Bad-Dreams-20g_p_124080.html)

Yoga(Pictures and Videos)

- <http://www.spiritvoyage.com/blog/index.php/kundalini-yoga-for-night-terrors-and-nightmares/>
- [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/30/yoga-for-sleep\\_n\\_3505226.html#slide=2629173](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/06/30/yoga-for-sleep_n_3505226.html#slide=2629173)
- <http://www.womenshealthmag.com/yoga/bedtime-yoga>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QLO7ivA6W6g>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YwAqlgkdGEA>

### Night Terror Forums

- <http://forums.digitalspy.co.uk/showthread.php?t=704330>
- Blogs (Comments from other people could provide support):
- <http://www.blogher.com/adult-night-terrors>

### Possible Printouts:

- <http://www.sleephealthfoundation.org.au/files/pdfs/sleep-terrors.pdf>
- <http://www.nvo.com/isleepless/usingprayertohelpyourself/>

### Citations:

- <http://www.nvo.com/isleepless/3nightlyritualstohelpyougettosleep/>
- <http://www.world-of-lucid-dreaming.com/night-terrors.html>
- <http://www.naturalsleep.org/night-terrors-in-adults/>
- <http://www.nativeremedies.com/ailment/nightmares-and-night-terrors-info.html>

- <http://www.end-your-sleep-deprivation.com/pavor-nocturnus.html>
- <http://www.nytimes.com/health/guides/disease/night-terror/overview.html>
- <https://suite.io/jessica-reed/32zj2kb>
- <http://umm.edu/programs/sleep/patients/relaxation#a>