HOME

The 7 Best Foods to Eat Before Bed for Better Sleep, Less Bloating, and Fewer Late-Night Cravings

By bestfolkmedicine · 06/07/2026 · 6 min read



Late-night hunger can feel like a trap: you are tired, your cravings are loud, and the wrong snack can leave you bloated, restless, or wide awake at 2 a.m.

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The good news? A small, balanced bedtime snack can sometimes be more helpful than going to bed overly hungry. The key is choosing foods that are gentle on digestion, satisfying enough to quiet cravings, and unlikely to trigger reflux or a blood-sugar roller coaster.

Large, greasy, spicy meals close to bedtime can interfere with sleep and increase discomfort. But a light snack is generally fine, especially when dinner was early or you are genuinely hungry.

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Here are seven smart options to keep in your bedtime routine.

1. Kiwi

Kiwi is one of the most interesting fruits for sleep support. It is light, refreshing, naturally sweet, and rich in fiber, vitamin C, and plant compounds.

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In a small study involving adults with sleep problems, eating two kiwis before bed was associated with falling asleep faster, sleeping longer, and improved sleep efficiency. More research is needed, but kiwi is a simple option worth trying.

Best bedtime serving:
1–2 kiwis, eaten about an hour before bed.

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Why it may help:

- Naturally sweet without being a heavy dessert
- Contains fiber that may help keep you satisfied
- Light enough for many people who feel bloated after richer snacks

2. Plain Greek Yogurt With Berries

Greek yogurt gives you protein, which can help make a small snack feel more filling and may reduce the urge to raid the kitchen later.

Pair it with a small handful of berries for natural sweetness and a little fiber. Choose plain yogurt rather than heavily sweetened versions, which can turn a calming snack into a sugar-heavy dessert.

Best bedtime serving:

½ cup plain Greek yogurt with a handful of blueberries, raspberries, or sliced strawberries.

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Why it may help:

- Protein can curb late-night hunger
- Berries provide flavor without excessive added sugar
- A smaller portion is less likely to feel overly heavy than ice cream, pastries, or large desserts

Choose lactose-free yogurt or another option if dairy tends to make you gassy or bloated.

3. Tart Cherries or Tart Cherry Juice

Tart cherries are widely discussed in the sleep world because they naturally contain melatonin-related compounds. Research suggests tart cherry juice may support sleep quality and sleep duration, though results vary and the evidence is still developing.

Best bedtime serving:

A small serving of tart cherries, or about ½ cup unsweetened tart cherry juice.

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Why it may help:

- Can satisfy a sweet craving without reaching for candy or cookies
- May support the body's natural sleep-wake rhythm
- Easy to pair with a small protein source such as yogurt or a few nuts

Choose unsweetened juice when possible, especially if you are watching blood sugar.

4. Banana With a Spoonful of Nut Butter

A banana is simple, portable, naturally sweet, and often easier on the stomach than rich desserts. Add a thin layer of almond or peanut butter for healthy fat and protein.

Bananas contain tryptophan, an amino acid involved in serotonin and melatonin production, although a banana is not a sleep cure by itself.

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Best bedtime serving:

½ to 1 banana with 1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon natural nut butter.

Why it may help:

- Gives you a satisfying mix of carbohydrate, fat, and protein
- Can help prevent the “I need something sweet” feeling
- Usually gentler than chocolate, chips, or baked goods

Keep the nut butter portion modest. Too much fat close to bedtime can feel heavy for some people.

5. Oatmeal With Cinnamon

Oatmeal is not only for breakfast. A small warm bowl can be a comforting late-night option, especially during colder months.

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The slow-digesting carbohydrates and soluble fiber can help you feel full without the heaviness of a large meal. Oats are also often well tolerated by people looking for more reflux-friendly, whole-grain choices.

Best bedtime serving:

½ cup cooked oats with cinnamon and a few berries or sliced banana.

Why it may help:

- Warm and comforting without being overly rich
- Fiber can support fullness and regular digestion
- Helps replace sugary cereal, cookies, or processed snacks

Avoid turning it into dessert with large amounts of sugar, chocolate chips, or heavy cream.

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6. Chamomile Tea With a Few Almonds

Chamomile tea is a classic wind-down ritual. While it will not magically knock you out, the routine itself can signal to your brain that the day is slowing down.

Pair it with a small handful of almonds if hunger is keeping you awake. Almonds offer healthy fats, protein, and magnesium, all of which can make a small snack more satisfying.

Best bedtime serving:

1 cup chamomile tea plus 8–12 almonds.

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Why it may help:

- Helps create a calming bedtime ritual
- The almonds can take the edge off hunger
- A good option when you want something light but not sweet

Avoid drinking large amounts of tea right before bed if waking to use the bathroom is already a problem.

7. A Small Turkey and Whole-Grain Crackers Plate

For people who prefer savory snacks, a small portion of turkey with a few whole-grain crackers can be surprisingly satisfying.

Turkey contains tryptophan, while whole-grain crackers provide a little carbohydrate. Together, they can feel more balanced than a bowl of salty chips or leftover takeout.

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Best bedtime serving:

A few slices of turkey breast with 3–4 whole-grain crackers.

Why it may help:

- Protein helps control hunger
- Savory enough to replace cravings for processed snacks

- Easy to portion and prepare in minutes

Choose lower-sodium turkey when possible, especially if salty foods make you thirsty overnight.

How to Avoid Bloating Before Bed

Even healthy foods can feel uncomfortable if the portion is too large or if you eat too quickly.

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For a calmer night, keep bedtime snacks small and simple. Avoid heavy meals, fried foods, alcohol, spicy dishes, carbonated drinks, and large amounts of caffeine close to bedtime. These can worsen reflux, gas, or sleep disruption.

A helpful rule: finish your main dinner at least two to three hours before sleep when possible. If you are truly hungry later, choose one small snack rather than another full meal.

The Best Bedtime Snack Formula

The ideal late-night snack is usually:

Small + protein-rich + gently sweet or savory + easy to digest

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Examples:

- Kiwi + Greek yogurt
- Banana + almond butter
- Oatmeal + cinnamon
- Tart cherries + a few walnuts
- Turkey + whole-grain crackers

The goal is not perfection. It is simply to go to bed comfortably satisfied instead of overly full, bloated, or battling cravings.

Final Thought

Food can support your sleep routine, but it cannot replace the basics: a regular bedtime, a darker room, less screen exposure, movement during the day, and enough overall nourishment.

Try one option for several nights, notice how your body responds, and build a routine that feels calm, satisfying, and realistic.

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If sleep problems, reflux, bloating, or nighttime cravings are frequent or severe, speak with a healthcare professional.

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