



## Healthy Mind...

### *Sweet Smells May Promote Sweet Dreams*

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The scent of flowers may lead to pleasant dreams, a new study reports.

The study, presented at the [American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Foundation](http://AmericanAcademyofOtolaryngology-HeadandNeckSurgeryFoundation) annual meeting in Chicago, found that the smell

of rotten eggs during sleep caused dreams to become negative, while the smell of roses had a positive effect.

German researchers, led by Boris Stuck, a professor of otorhinolaryngology at Heidelberg University, studied 15 healthy females. When the women entered rapid-eye movement (REM) sleep (the stage when most dreaming occurs), they were exposed to a non-odorous control, the smell of roses or the smell of rotten eggs for 10 seconds. One minute later, the participants were woken up. Each woman was exposed to each substance once. When the women woke up, they were asked to describe their dreams and how they felt during the dreams. Dreams were reported in 40 out of the 45 awakenings. All of the participants reported positive dreams when they were exposed to the scent of roses, while most reported negative dreams when they were exposed to the scent of rotten eggs.

Aromatherapy has been used for many years to reduce stress and anxiety and improve sleep. During aromatherapy, essential oils from plants are diluted and then sprayed in the air, inhaled or applied to the skin. Massage is often used to deliver oils into the body and is considered the most effective method. Lavender aromatherapy is commonly used for relaxation and has been shown to relieve anxiety. Early research suggests that lavender may help improve sleep quality, particularly in people with insomnia.

Previous studies have found that other types of stimulation during sleep, such as pressure, sound or vibration, may also affect dreams.

For more information about integrative therapies for sleep disturbances, please visit Natural Standard's [Comparative Effectiveness](http://NaturalStandard.com/ComparativeEffectiveness) database.

References 1) Natural Standard Research Collaboration: The Authority on Integrative Medicine. [www.naturalstandard.com](http://www.naturalstandard.com). Copyright © 2008. 2) [No authors listed]. Abstracts of the annual meeting of the American Academy of Otolaryngology--Head and Neck Surgery Foundation, September 21-24, 2008, Chicago, Illinois, USA. Otolaryngol Head Neck Surg. 2008 Aug; 139(2 Suppl 1):P10-200. [View Abstract](#)

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## Healthy Body...

### *Acupressure May Reduce Anxiety Before Surgery*

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Researchers found that acupressure before surgery may help reduce anxiety in children, but it does not appear to reduce the need for sedatives.

Acupressure is based on the idea that medical conditions occur when energy flow is too low, too high or blocked. Acupressure aims to restore normal life energy flow using finger and palm pressure, stretching, massaging, and other bodywork techniques.

The study, published in *Anesthesia & Analgesia*, included 52 children who were 8-17 years old and scheduled to receive general anesthesia for endoscopic procedures. Children were randomly assigned to acupressure treatment or sham treatment before surgery. In the treatment group, a small, adhesive acupressure bead was placed at the extra-1 pressure point, located between the eyebrows. In the sham group, the acupressure bead was placed above the left eyebrow, an area that has not been linked to any clinical effects. The beads were left in place during the endoscopic procedures.

Anxiety was measured using the State Trait Anxiety Inventory for Children Questionnaire before the study and one half hour after treatment. Hypnotic effects were also measured using the average Bispectral Index value.

Acupressure reduced anxiety before surgery by nine percent, while anxiety steadily rose two percent in children who received sham treatment.

However, no differences were noted during or after the endoscopic procedures. In addition, the authors found that acupressure did not affect the need for general anesthetic (Diprivan®) or the depth of sedation. No hypnotic effects were noted. Recovery after the endoscopic procedures was also similar, with no difference in time to wake and incidence of nausea and vomiting.

## Recipe... *Baked Pears with Cranberries*

3 ripe but firm pears, peeled, cored and quartered  
1/3 cup pomegranate juice, cranberry juice, or apple cider  
1/2 cup dried cranberries  
1/4 cup chopped walnuts

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Place quartered pears in a baking dish. Drizzle juice over pears and sprinkle cranberries and walnuts over the top. Bake for 20 minutes or until pears are tender. Enjoy with a scoop of low fat frozen yogurt or dusted with a little cinnamon or nutmeg.



*As always, please be mindful of any food allergies or dietary restrictions you may have. Please consult with your medical provider if you have any questions.*

