

How Better Sleep Can Help You Lose Weight [Podcast 66]

Dr. Park's Breathe Better, Sleep Better, Live Better Podcast

- Kathy Park: [00:17](#) Welcome to Dr. Park's Breathe Better, Sleep Better, Live Better podcast, where our goal is to help you get the sleep you need for the life you want. My name is Kathy Park, your cohost for today and I'm here in the studio with my husband, Dr. Steven Park. Hey Steve, how are you doing today?
- Dr. Park: [00:34](#) I'm doing great. How about you?
- Kathy Park: [00:35](#) Pretty good. Thanks. So summer is in full swing here, right now in the Northeast and there's no better time to get fit and get slim than now. And I know that a lot of our listeners are starting their Keto, Paleo, Whole30 or whatever diets that are really popular right now. And there's nothing wrong with that. But today Steve is going to talk about an issue that not a lot of people think about when they're going on a diet or they're starting off trying to lose weight. And that issue is, are you sleeping well? Are you sleeping long enough? And that's something that most of us don't think about. We don't connect sleep with weight, but that's a huge, huge problem that one needs to address before you do any sort of diet regimen. So that's what Steve is going to be talking about today on today's podcast. And the topic of today's podcast is titled How Better Sleep Can Help You lose Weight. But before we begin, I wanted to remind our listeners that the information you hear today is for general education and information purposes only and should not be relied upon as personal medical advice. Please consult your doctor before following any advice or regimen given on the show as your particular case may be different than the ones

given. Okay, Steve. So tell us why you think sleep is so closely related with weight.

- Dr. Park: [02:09](#) Well, actually, I don't think it, I know it is because there is scientific evidence out there showing that poor sleep in general, no matter how little or how low quality sleep you get, prevents you from losing weight or in fact, it actually causes weight gain in general.
- Kathy Park: [02:26](#) Okay. So can you give us one specific example?
- Dr. Park: [02:30](#) Sure. If you are in a state of stress due to not sleeping well...
- Kathy Park: [02:35](#) Okay.
- Dr. Park: [02:35](#) ...it changes all your hormones that deal with weight and appetite and hunger to make you crave unhealthy, sugary, fatty foods. That's why when you're stressed or tired, you're going to crave sugary food to get that sugar spike. And then your cortisol levels go up. Right?
- Kathy Park: [02:51](#) Okay.
- Dr. Park: [02:51](#) So your stress levels go up and that also raise your sugar levels. And so there's many, many studies showing that poor sleep is linked with being more overweight and it's hard to lose weight if you're not sleeping well.
- Kathy Park: [03:05](#) Okay. So there's a chain reaction that happens when you don't sleep well, you get stressed out, your hormones get affected and in effect it, it doesn't do, your body doesn't do what it's supposed to do in order to feel satiated. So eat more, we gain more weight, then it gets harder and harder to lose weight, sort of speak.
- Dr. Park: [03:24](#) Right. And that also cascades into sleep breathing problems because the more weight you gain, the higher the risk of sleep breathing problems and the tail end of that, the tip of the iceberg, it's sleep apnea, but you can be

in this gray area and not have sleep apnea officially but still have breathing problems at night and that could be due to nasal congestion, large tonsils and other things and acid reflux. But I just want to kind of point out an interesting study...it was very unscientific study published by Glamour magazine many years ago and they quoted me, as one of the of the experts on this. What they did was they, I think it took a handful of women, like 10 women who are mildly overweight, middle aged, and they found that they slept somewhere around like I think like five to six hours on average and all they did for 90 days was to sleep one hour longer. And on average I think they lost around 10 to 15 pounds. Some of them even more and some less just by sleeping one hour longer.

- Kathy Park: [04:24](#) Just one hour equals 10 pounds of weight loss. That's a huge amount. I don't see those kinds of results happening or being touted from all of these health gurus either or diet experts. They usually say what's the right amount of weight that you should be losing, which is if you reduce this number of calories, you get this number of poundage loss every week. I think it's something like if you reduce 1200 calories per day, you can effectively lose one pound a week or something like that. So it's pretty dramatic. But you're saying that good sleep, good quality, one hour extra sleep, in that article, allowed these women to lose 10 pounds...
- Dr. Park: [05:09](#) And there also lots of scientific studies showing that the better quality and quantity of sleep you get, the more effective weight lost regimens are.
- Kathy Park: [05:17](#) Okay, great. We're going to have a link to the PDF, the actual PDF of a copy of that article in case anybody's interested in meeting the whole article and just finding out, it's a little interesting because it's from a fashion magazine, but it does have other experts who talk on that topic as well. Right? So it is not totally fluff. There is some evidence behind it.

- Dr. Park: [05:43](#) Right. And I just want to point out that we're not just talking about sleeping longer. A lot of my listeners, I know that they tried to sleep longer and they still can't get a good night's sleep. And so we're going to talk about that issue as well.
- Kathy Park: [05:56](#) Okay. So sleeping better, quality, is what causes weight loss.
- Dr. Park: [06:02](#) Right, and enough quantity.
- Kathy Park: [06:02](#) And enough quantity. So, what are some things getting in the way you think?
- Dr. Park: [06:11](#) Well, a lot of people attribute poor sleep to insomnia, so people have very stressful lives or, they have trouble falling asleep or they keep waking up in the middle of the night and that's called sleep onset or sleep maintenance insomnia.
- Dr. Park: [06:25](#) And you know, there are lots of different recommendations for that. And I'm sure you've seen these top 10 tips to go to bed to fall asleep quickly on the Internet. And these are the classic sleep hygiene issues, but many people with the, the availability of information on the Internet that they've tried all these things, right? And they still can't get a good night's sleep. They keep waking up in the middle of the night, going to the bathroom, they can sleep 10 hours and still feel exhausted. And so these are some of the issues that they we're going to address. It's not just about getting seven, eight hours of sleep, it's about getting seven to eight hours of quality sleep.
- Kathy Park: [07:03](#) Okay, so what specifically is that issue? That's not, that's getting in the way of people not being able to sleep, have better quality sleep?
- Dr. Park: [07:11](#) I'm a little bit biased being an ENT surgeon and airway specialist, and sleep doctor. It's breathing. I've argued

many times that modern people fundamentally have problems breathing at night and even during the daytime, and the reasons are narrowed airways and our jaws are getting smaller. That's why everyone needs braces. And so this leads to this cascade of problems, we can't sleep. And then that causes this chain reaction. We have more inflammation, increased stress levels, lowered hormones. It's this whole cascade of events that leads to eventually weight gain. The weight gain makes everything else worse. So I wanted to kind of focus in on the six or seven concepts that you have to understand before implementing these dietary or exercise regimens. Because if you don't understand these concepts, you won't get as far, when you implement these dietary regimens.

- Kathy Park: [08:06](#) And these seven principles are what you consider to be the tenant of good breathing. This is what allows you to breathe well at night so you can sleep better at night. And don't you feel sometimes like you're a broken record, you have to, you have to reiterate again and again, it's not the sleeping, but it's also the breathing quality that induces better sleep. And so, and I think this is a totally different way of looking at breathing that you've come up with because you did start to feel like, oh, nobody's listening to me anymore because I sound like a broken record. I've been saying this again and again for the last 10 years. So you decided to come up with this acronym. Can you tell us what that is?
- Dr. Park: [08:52](#) Which you didn't like but I think it's kind of cool.
- Kathy Park: [08:53](#) Okay, well I'm not gonna say it. So I'm gonna have you introduce this new revolutionary concept and it's part of your sleep breathing paradigm. And it kind of goes along with that. But it's a nice, simple acronym that anybody can remember and keep in mind. So what is that?
- Dr. Park: [09:10](#) Let me just preface it by saying that this is something that you should implement or try before you seek professional advice. So things that you can do on your own. Before

taking a pill or going to a doctor or getting, tested. So this is called the NOSTRILS plan. N O S T R I L S and each of those letters has a topic associated with.

- Kathy Park: [09:38](#) It's very cute. Okay. Nostrils. Alright, so tell us what does the N stand for in nostrils?
- Dr. Park: [09:46](#) And this is something that I emphasize over and over again, which is to improve your nasal breathing. So nose is paramount because what's the first point of entry for breathing? It's your nose, right?
- Kathy Park: [09:59](#) ...over the mouth sometimes when people mouth breathe...
- Dr. Park: [10:02](#) Because your nose is stuffy. So being an ENT surgeon, I deal with this all the time. People come in with allergies, colds, sinusitis, deviated septums and this impedes nasal breathing. And if you don't breathe through your nose properly, there's a long list of things that happens that's detrimental to your health, right?
- Kathy Park: [10:20](#) God gave us a nose. And there's a reason for that. You need to use it.
- Dr. Park: [10:24](#) And physiologically, one interesting fact that everyone should know is that the nose makes a gas called nitric oxide. I think someone got the Nobel prize for that in the seventies. It actually dilates blood vessels. So the nose and the sinuses make this gas and when you inhale it into your lungs, it increases oxygen uptake by 10 to 20% higher.
- Kathy Park: [10:46](#) That's pretty big.
- Dr. Park: [10:47](#) Yeah. So imagine if you're mouth breathing you have this hunger for air, or oxygen, right? So you're going to breathe a little bit faster and more shallow. And by doing that you're slightly hyperventilating. That lowers your CO2 levels in your bloodstream and that's going to make you a little bit more tired and anxious.

- Kathy Park: [11:05](#) Right. I mean it's sort of like that feeling that you get when you wake up in the morning and you breathe in fresh air, like you're in the mountains or something. And you go out there and you breathe in fresh air. That's the whole part of the experience. You feel great, right? But you're saying that when we're mouth breathing or we're not getting in enough oxygen through our nose, then we can never kind of get there.
- Dr. Park: [11:28](#) Right. And that's why you hear people every once in awhile, when you use breathe right strips, these nasal dilator strips. I would say maybe five or 10%. Not everyone, but a small fraction have these amazing results. They feel like they're living again, they're breathing and sleeping really well. Just opening up the nostrils, it caves in as you breathe in.
- Kathy Park: [11:49](#) So even small incremental steps like that you're saying can make a huge difference.
- Dr. Park: [11:54](#) Right. So whether it's due to allergies, deviated septums, nasal trauma, this long list of reasons why this happens. And the other thing that's important to know is that when you have nasal congestion, when your nose is stuffy as you're growing up, it prevents your face from growing properly. I know if you remember that doctor John Mew has a picture on his website, I think it's labeled the Gerbil boy or seven, eight year old, nine year old boy, pretty good facial features. And then he got a gerbil for a birthday present and I think when they showed him when he was later in his teen years, he had this long face, long narrow face with mouth breathing
- Kathy Park: [12:32](#) ... and he had trouble breathing through his nose. Okay
- Dr. Park: [12:35](#) Unfortunately you see this quite often these days, young people with long, very long recessed faces. They're mouth breathing
- Kathy Park: [12:42](#) ..and hollowed out eyes or

- Dr. Park: [12:44](#) ...that that's because the cheekbones don't develop. So the cheekbones are recessed inwards so you have no cheekbones and then that lowers the lower eyelid. So then the lower part of the white of your eye, the sclera, it shows more in relation to the iris.
- Kathy Park: [12:58](#) And you've talked extensively in the past and you have podcasts with experts who've talked about how important facial structure is to our jaws, and to our breathing in general. And, we'll have a link in the show notes to some of those podcasts that you've done with other experts. So, okay, going on. Um, what does the O in nostrils stand for?
- Dr. Park: [13:22](#) OK, so next one is oxygen. Now, obviously when you're breathing in, you think you're getting in oxygen. And a lot of people think that because you don't have enough oxygen, if you don't breathe probably you're not going to get enough oxygen. And that's true for people with sleep apnea, but it's not just when you stop breathing multiple times at night, it's when you don't breathe properly during the daytime. That causes oxygen levels go down, but not in a way that you think. So obviously I'm looking at you right now. You're breathing. And if I put a pulse oximeter on your finger, it's going to show the oxygen` levels are going to be in the high nineties. Right?
- Kathy Park: [14:01](#) Okay. But hopefully,
- Dr. Park: [14:04](#) but one of the concepts that's really, really important to understand is that any kind of physiologic stress—remember I talked about how if you're at the Bronx Zoo and a tiger escapes, what's your first priority when a tiger is running after you?
- Kathy Park: [14:19](#) I'm going to run away.
- Dr. Park: [14:20](#) Right. Or some people would fight, but most people would run. So when you're running away from a tiger or in a fight or in a stressful situation, the last thing you want to do is to digest or have sex or eat, right? And your body is going

to shunt, mobilize all the blood flow and energy away from unnecessary parts to necessary parts. So your gut, your reproductive organs, parts of your brain, your skin, your hands, the body shunts blood and nervous system innervation away from these parts to the core muscles, to the heart. So you can fight or run.

Kathy Park: [14:55](#) So it goes on automatic mode....run away.

Dr. Park: [14:58](#) Exactly. But if your body is in this chronic state of stress due to emotional issues or physiologic problems or poor breathing, or interrupted sleep like I'm describing, your body is in this chronic sympathetic overdrive. Okay. Right, your catecholamines, epinephrine, norepinephrine, all these levels go up, not just hormonally, but neurologically. So imagine if these parts of the body are constantly deprived of bloodflow, right? So it's not that you have lack of oxygen. So when you measure your oxygen level, this can be normal, but these tissues like your skin or your gut is going to have lowered levels of blood flow. So it can't, it doesn't have the proper energy and resources to thrive and digest and absorb food, for example. So it's not lack of oxygen, but lack of blood flow that gives you lack of oxygen, right? And in the process, the body, to try to compensate it secretes the signals to cause inflammation and grow more tissues and blood vessels. So think about the implications of that. Right?

Kathy Park: [16:04](#) Right. And I could just sort of, what I'm sensing is that if we're not breathing well, it's not just specifically that we're not able to sleep well, but we're not, our bodies are not able to function properly to process, like you said, digestion. We're not able to process how we make decisions even because we're not thinking clearly. And all of that plays into why we may be consuming bad foods too...

Dr. Park: [16:31](#) yup, crave unhealthy foods.

- Kathy Park: [16:34](#) And um, it causes fatigue and overstress, which also feeds into this overeating factor too. Right? Okay. So it's, it's all related. It's not a separate process, but you're saying that it's a chain reaction that happens and it's all starting with the fact that we're not breathing, right? We're not getting our vital need. Right? And so our body is compensating. Okay.
- Dr. Park: [16:59](#) This also, this craze, this fad of, of ingesting, or inhaling highly oxygenated products. So anything that has word O2 or oxygen gets marketed as being healthy. But if you're not breathing properly, no matter how much oxygen you get, it's worthless. I have many instances in the operating room where a patient is not breathing and the anesthesiologist give them oxygen. But what's the point of giving oxygen if they're not breathing? They're obstructing, so just lift up the chin, they're breathing again. They don't need oxygen.
- Kathy Park: [17:32](#) Right. I mean, I think this brings up, just on a personal note, I've mentioned this before in another podcast, but when I was growing up in southern California, I remember I told you I lived near an orange grove because I lived in Orange County, California. And so all throughout my childhood I was severely allergic to orange blossoms. And I didn't know that. I just knew that my nose was stuffy 90% of the time and I felt miserable all the time growing up. So I wouldn't say that I was overweight, but I think that that's what caused the cascade of events that happened, which was I had a hyperthyroid problem when I was 16 and then that eventually morphed into in my twenties, hypo thyroidism, which caused me to gain weight and then it caused a whole cascade of other issues like depression and, and whatnot. And, I do think that nasal breathing, even though we kind of take it for granted, we're breathing well, it has a tremendous effect on how we live our lives on a daily basis. Cause I, I never felt great when I was growing up there. But once I moved to the Northeast here, no longer had the orange blossoms. I felt so great. I thought it was the smog that was causing all of that. Um, because when the air quality is bad, I know for a fact that I

just feel miserable. I can't think well, I can't exercise well, I can't do anything well because I feel so sluggish. But when I'm here, you know, it's great being outdoors because I don't have that sort of problem. So I do totally agree with you, just on a personal note, that nasal breathing is just vital to our health.

- Dr. Park: [19:11](#) And there's some of you out there that will tell me, oh, my nose is fine. I can breathe through my nose and you can just squeeze a little bit of air in and out, but you're still breathing. Right? But most people don't know what normal breathing is. Right. So it's amazing what, what experience that people have after you give them some Afrin and lift up his nostrils.
- Kathy Park: [19:31](#) Hey, don't you have a Youtube video online where you talk about the nasal dilators and you have an example of where you pull the chin bath and some people just doing that has a tremendous effect on how well they can read.
- Dr. Park: [19:46](#) All right. Well here's another example. Some people who would like to sleep on their stomachs or sides, what they do is they lift their arm up above the head. Okay. And the, the side of the face, the cheek is, um, is touching the arm, the inner side of the arm, and the arm is pulling the the nostril apart.
- Kathy Park: [20:07](#) Oh, interesting. Interesting. And they can breathe better.
- Dr. Park: [20:11](#) They don't realize why that, that sleep position works for them.
- Kathy Park: [20:14](#) Wow. Okay. And some patients have explained that to you. Well, what we do to compensate, right? Yep. Okay, so that brings us to the next acronym letter. What does s stand for?
- Dr. Park: [20:30](#) Sleep position? Now, this is a huge topic. And there are actually books written on this and most of them talk about personality types, you know, iand different sleep position

names. Um, I think yoga books have different names with different sleep positions, but I have a really simple category of sleep positions, back, side or stomach. That's it.

- Kathy Park: [20:52](#) Yeah. Yeah. And I bet you if we took a poll right now of all our listeners and ask them, are you a side sleeper, back sleeper or a stomach sleeper? I bet you we would have a high number of side and stomach. Very rarely you can see a back sleeper,
- Kathy Park: [21:08](#) right. Have sleep breathing problems. Right.
- Dr. Park: [21:11](#) All those, all those images in pictures, comics, in movies, someone is sleeping on their backs. That's not true.
- Kathy Park: [21:18](#) That's not true. That doesn't happen in real life.
- Dr. Park: [21:21](#) Remember, um, Back to The Future, the main character, it opens with him waking up in bed on his stomach with his head cocked back.
- Kathy Park: [21:30](#) Right. Well, not only that, I, I do remember I used to be a back sleeper when I was younger and then over the years as I got older, I couldn't sleep on my back anymore. I started morphing into a side sleeper. So, yeah, I do think that there's something to that.
- Dr. Park: [21:47](#) And the reason for this is how narrow your jaws are. So in the old days, people did sleep on their backs and now because of our jaws shrinking, there's less space, um, behind our tongues and soft palates. So the jaw narrowing narrows your soft tissues, which narrows the airways. So the more muscle relaxation you have during deep sleep, the more obstructed you get. So being on your back, due to gravity the tongue and the palate falls back more. So it's all relative.
- Kathy Park: [22:13](#) So you can even see that in the current marketplace with all these specific special pillows and all these beds that

incline, you know, kind of, what is that? You, you can, you can set the sleep positions and those are very, very expensive. But you're saying that it's as a result of our facial narrowing, right? And jaws narrowing and our airways just dwindling in general.

- Dr. Park: [22:41](#) And so it's all these options. They work to various degrees. You have to kind of try it before you know whether or not it's going to work. So that's unfortunate because some of these things are very expensive. Um, but most people just compensate by sipping on their sides. Problems do happen. however, when you get injured or you undergo an operation. Then let's say you're a lifelong stomach sleeper and you get back surgery or knee surgery, now you have to sleep on your back for a couple of weeks or months. Your sleep quality goes down. A lot of these people unfortunately gain weight, which makes the sleep breathing problem worse.
- Kathy Park: [23:13](#) Okay, so let's just go back and recap. So the first thing that people need to be thinking about before they go on a diet, in other words, to get their sleep in check, is to clear up their nasal breathing and think about the oxygen saturation desaturation, due to the fact that they may not be breathing so well through the nose even during the day, and then the sleep position, check that are you a side sleeper.? Which position do you sleep best in? Right?
- Dr. Park: [23:45](#) The best position is whatever you prefer sleep in.
- Kathy Park: [23:47](#) Right, right. And don't, don't go on your back. Just because somebody tells you like an allergist. I, I know some of your patients refuse to sleep on the side or on their stomachs because their allergies, I mean there, what is it?
- Dr. Park: [24:01](#) The dermatologist told them don't sleep on your stomach because it causes facial wrinkles, but I can argue that you're going to get more wrinkles if you sleep on your back.

Kathy Park: [24:09](#) That's what I was going to say, okay. I think sleep is a little bit more important. Well, I don't know. That's just me. Okay, so what is the T in nostrils stand for?

Dr. Park: [24:17](#) This is probably the single most important advice I give to my patients. Really, really simple and I would say about 20-25% of people get immediate results pretty quickly and that's the timing of when you eat right before you go to bed,

Kathy Park: [24:31](#) which is hard. Yeah. It's not to say that it's easy for a lot of these, a lot of our listeners probably because they work until eight o'clock and then get home. Right.

Dr. Park: [24:41](#) It's very challenging for some people, but sometimes you have to get really creative. Like some people, I tell them just take dinner to work or lunch. Um, take food with you so that you can have dinner before you come home. Sometimes you have unfortunately may have to eat out if that means eating earlier, which is not as healthy.

Kathy Park: [24:58](#) And some people have just skip dinner all together. They have a heavy lunch or they have a very filling lunch and then they just skip dinner.

Dr. Park: [25:05](#) Yeah. You see a lot of older people doing that, saying I never eat after five o'clock

Kathy Park: [25:09](#) No. now my mom, stopped doing that awhile back.

Dr. Park: [25:13](#) It loads your sleep quality so they know they do it subconsciously. Right. I think there's something to that. Yeah. So the reason for this is that assuming you start breathing once in a while, the more stomach just that you have in your stomach, the more comes up when you start reading once in a while, which causes more inflammation and swelling and more instruction.

- Kathy Park: [25:32](#) Right. So, and I think European cultures, they only eat two meals a day most of the time. And then for dinner, they have a very, very light snack.
- Dr. Park: [25:41](#) That's what I felt. Um, I did some study abroad in Germany and Austria, when I was in college. And I was shocked how, how little amount of dinner that they give you [inaudible] they have these huge lunches that takes forever to eat
- Kathy Park: [25:57](#) and it takes the take about two hours.
- Dr. Park: [26:01](#) Yeah. And then for dinner, like five, three, they give us these tiny little snacks. So my friend and I had to go out to McDonald's to have dinner afterwards,
- Kathy Park: [26:10](#) McDonalds, which is the worst. Okay, well, moving on. So we've gone through N O S T, in nostrils. What does the R stand for?
- Dr. Park: [26:20](#) So this R stands for relaxation. Now I can argue that if you sleep better, naturally you will be more relaxed because you're sympathetic stress response won't be as stimulated or active, right? But there are things that you can do voluntarily to calm your nervous system. So this involves all the things that, that you see, the promoted breathing exercises, yoga, meditation, stretches, all the things that you know are going to calm your nervous system. And I can even include things like avoiding surfing the Internet. Not checking your email, all these things that psychologically or emotionally, um, simulate you, right?
- Kathy Park: [27:06](#) Cause anxiety, anxiety, right? Excessive anxiety, which is, I totally agree that it's not just about doing something like doing meditation, doing Yoga, those are all great things.
- Kathy Park: [27:17](#) But even if you can't do any of those things, if you could just take 10 minutes, a total blackout, meaning not checking the Internet, that checking your phone, not going on your computer and not reading the newspaper, just

being, it can have a tremendous effect on your mental wellbeing. Right, right. That's what you're saying.

- Dr. Park: [27:37](#) So there was a, um, a breathing technique that we learned a long time ago and where we both tried it, we felt really good about it. It's called the relaxing breath and it's taught in yoga. I first heard about it through Andrew Weil decades ago, a very popular holistic doctor. And the concept is that you breathe in through your nose on a count of four, hold your breath for a few seconds. Then you breathe out slowly through your mouth on a count of seven and do about four or five cycles. And so if you do this properly, you will see that your heart rate goes down.
- Kathy Park: [28:10](#) I do that sometimes when I'm practicing yoga and it does help
- Dr. Park: [28:14](#) but do it just to make an effort to do it throughout the day. Like if you're in the elevator, if you're waiting on the phone, um, before you start a major activity or have to give a talk, for example, it has a way of calming your nervous system
- Kathy Park: [28:28](#) that might also help with road rage too. Not so much in the Northeast, but definitely Southwest. Okay. Um, so that's R, what about the next acronym I in nostrils? What does that stand for?
- Dr. Park: [28:45](#) I stand for ingestion. So that means anything that you put into your body or onto your body. So this involves either the food you eat or the stuff you put on your body that you're exposed to. Okay. So we, we had, we had a couple of podcasts about this in the past about the quality of foods that we're eating, which is, it's pretty sad these days. So you have to go out of your way to get high quality, nontoxic, nutritious food,
- Kathy Park: [29:14](#) whole foods versus processed.

Dr. Park: [29:15](#) Right. I don't think I have to lecture everyone about this because people know what healthy food is. They just choose not to eat it

Kathy Park: [29:23](#) because it's so much easier to opt for that processed artificial stuff or prepackaged stuff. Right. You know, and I don't blame people, it takes a lot of work, but I think we've talked about this in the past. It's just a matter of getting started and being intentional. And once you do, it's, it gets harder to go out of your way to get processed foods, right. To eat that. Right. As opposed to eating whole nutritious and delicious foods that you can cook at home and you can monitor because it feels so much better. Yeah.

Dr. Park: [29:56](#) And this also involves all the personal haircare products. Um, the water you drink it. We had podcasts on these topics, toxins in your home, and also what you eat in past topics.

Kathy Park: [30:09](#) How all that also causes sleep problems and breathing problems? Okay. So L stands for what in NOSTRILS?

Dr. Park: [30:16](#) Light. Unfortunately, because of modern technology, we've brought light into our houses at night. So it started with the light bulb, right?

Kathy Park: [30:30](#) I like my light bulb..

Dr. Park: [30:32](#) But now we have not just lightbulbs but these really bright devices like every home appliance that has super bright LED lights. Right. That's like 10 times brighter than your nightlights, right?

Kathy Park: [30:44](#) Super lights. Yes. Yes. And they sometimes blink too.

Dr. Park: [30:48](#) Yeah. Blinking, right.

Kathy Park: [30:49](#) Blinking and talking and pulsating. It's like a disco theme.

Dr. Park: [30:54](#) And they've done studies showing that even the smallest amount of light, like even the candlelight can disrupt your circadian rhythm and melatonin levels.

Kathy Park: [31:02](#) Really? Candlelight.

Dr. Park: [31:03](#) Yeah. So the science behind this is that light in general suppresses Melatonin that you'll sleep hormone. Oh, okay. All right. So that's why you should shut down lighting. You know, after it gets dark. Most of us have full lights on up until the time you go to sleep.

Kathy Park: [31:22](#) Well, it's not just the light, it's all that digital devices that's very stimulating,

Dr. Park: [31:28](#) especially the, um, the screens. They have bright LED lights. They have lots of blue light, which lowers melatonin even more. So it's a challenge even in our family.

Kathy Park: [31:37](#) Yes, it is.

Dr. Park: [31:38](#) So every time I travel, I remember to take, electrical tape to block all the little blinking lights. It's bad when you travel.

Kathy Park: [31:47](#) Yeah. We, I mean I think that our family has, um, because you become aware and that light is such a huge factor in to our sleep. We've done whatever we can in our bedrooms. We set it up so that, and we've designed it with the intention of reducing the lights, um, in our bedrooms so that when we sleep at night, when we go in there, we're not exposed to so much bright light. Right? And we'd go out of our way. So I think that anybody can do this intentionally

Dr. Park: [32:16](#) just turn the light off in your bedroom, wait about five and 10 minutes for your eyes to adjust. You just do a survey of what's blinking, what's very, very bright. You may have to invest in blackout curtains if you're in a very urban area.

Kathy Park: [32:28](#) Yeah, I did a blog post recently on my website if anybody's interested, um, how to optimize your bedroom for better sleep.

Dr. Park: [32:37](#) What's the website?

Kathy Park: [32:37](#) So it's my koreanamericanhome.com, and we'll have a link in the show notes. It's just my little plug in there. Okay. So what's the last acronym stand for

Dr. Park: [32:48](#) S sleep hygiene.

Kathy Park: [32:50](#) Okay. I'm not surprised.

Dr. Park: [32:52](#) It encompasses all the things that you hear about on the Internet and what all the sleep doctors tell you to do, which is don't eat late, which is what I talked about before. Don't use your bed for anything except for sleep and sex. Um, so don't read or don't eat in bed. So you want to condition yourself to be only sleeping in bed.

Kathy Park: [33:11](#) Okay, great. When you see bed, that means sleep, right? Your mind has to think, okay,

Dr. Park: [33:18](#) Again, no electronic screens. Um, if you can't fall asleep within 30 minutes, just get out and do something else, like read a book. Um, because if you stay in bed for two hours before falling asleep, you're conditioning yourself to stay asleep for two hours because that's what you expect to happen.

Kathy Park: [33:33](#) Oh really? Okay.

Dr. Park: [33:34](#) So that's where cognitive behavior therapy comes into play to help you kind of defeat these negative thoughts. And there's a whole list of other things that you'll find on these lists. But my point is, a lot of people have tried all these things on the Internet and they've gone to sleep doctors and oftentimes it works pretty well. Cognitive behavioral therapy has been found to work as well as

sleeping pills and a lot better in the longterm. But a lot of people, despite all of this, still can't sleep properly.

- Kathy Park: [34:05](#) Okay
- Dr. Park: [34:05](#) And that's when you have to kind of, at this point, you have to start thinking about seeing a professional. So if you have a nasal breathing issue, see an ENT doctor, um, if you snore heavily a sleep doctor, you need professional help.
- Kathy Park: [34:19](#) Okay.
- Dr. Park: [34:19](#) And then a lot of times the dentists will actually make that recommendation because they see what's happening inside your mouth
- Kathy Park: [34:25](#) Right, and they notice that narrowing of the airway and whatnot. Okay. So, and you wrote a blog post about this not too long ago, which we'll have a link in the shownotes that goes into much more detail, right?
- Dr. Park: [34:37](#) Yup, Yup.
- Kathy Park: [34:38](#) To these, um, seven different areas that you've just talked about. Okay. So these are good things to start with. Any last thoughts that you have before we wrap up for today?
- Dr. Park: [34:50](#) So all these things that we went over are not only to optimize your sleep and your health and wellbeing, but also is your starting point to avoid getting to that chronic disease state that most Americans are caught in right now. Right? And so a lot of people end up taking multiple medications. They gain weight. It's really hard to come off these medications. Like basically you're on it for the rest of your life. And we talked about how many of these medications, prescription medications, also diminishes your sleep quality and your breathing too. So it's not a pretty picture. Y

Kathy Park: [35:27](#) You know what I just heard going through my head? Stairway to..., what is that Hotel California song? Many go in, but no one goes... I think so many people are entering in through that wide gateway of, of people just, you know, the consumerism and um, the convenience and the comforts of what they're finding to be, you know, the, the norm. And with the medications we've talked about in the past with the regular process foods that we've talked about, all of these are conveniences, modern conveniences of daily life. And to fight against that, I think it's just so much harder.

Dr. Park: [36:10](#) Yeah, it's a full time job

Kathy Park: [36:14](#) And, but I, I do think that you enter in and those people, I rarely see anybody coming out again. Right? Once you get there, it's just that much harder to come out then starting from the position of I'm not going to even enter into that state of chronic disease state. That's what you talked about. The CDS if we're talking about acronyms? The CDS, um, situation and um, I think you're right. I think people have to, you know, this NOSTRILS concept, even though it's a little funny to me, still,, um, it's a very simple thing that I think anybody can factor into their lives. And you're saying that if we put those steps into place, then we may not have to go through all of these extensive dieting programs, right?

Dr. Park: [37:06](#) Well, it's going to make everything that you choose to do work much better so you can lose more weight to and keep it off.

Kathy Park: [37:11](#) So that's a good point. Anybody thinking about going on their diets this year, diet regimen, Keto, Paleo, Whole30, we've talked about, um, any of those diet regiments first consider NOSTRILS in other words.

Dr. Park: [37:25](#) Yes.

Kathy Park: [37:25](#) Okay

Dr. Park: [37:25](#) Good point.

Kathy Park: [37:27](#) Anything else?

Dr. Park: [37:28](#) So I want to challenge all of our listeners. I'm guessing just from the feedback I'm getting that many of you are sleeping anywhere from four to six hours a night on average and that's way too short for a good night's sleep. So not even considering whether or not you have sleep apnea but just in general. So, make commitment to yourself and to me and to you that your're going to sleep one hour longer.

Kathy Park: [37:51](#) Okay.

Dr. Park: [37:52](#) And do that for the next 30 days and let me know what happens.

Kathy Park: [37:56](#) Right. How much more weight you lose as a result of that, right? Great. Thanks again everyone for tuning in today. If you've enjoyed today's conversation, you can get all of the show notes and the resources mentioned in this program at doctorstevenpark.com/loseweight. And while you're there, check out all of the resources we have available at the website and subscribe to the podcast so that you'd never miss out on any future episodes. And one last thing, if the information you heard today has helped you in any way, please take a few minutes to give us a rating on iTunes. Your ratings and reviews go a long way to help us gain the visibility we need so that others who are looking for this information can find us on iTunes. Thank you again for helping someone else breathe better and sleep better. This is Kathy Park. on behalf of Dr. Steven Park, thanking you for spending some time with us today. Until next time, wishing that you breathe better and sleep better so that you can live better. Bye Bye.