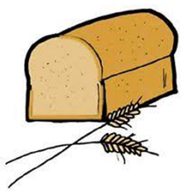
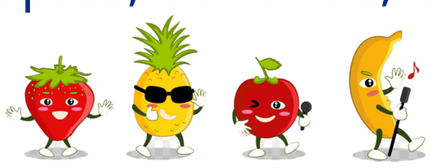
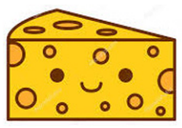
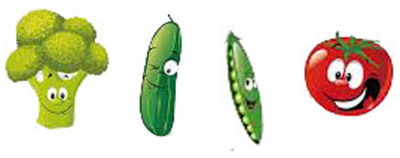
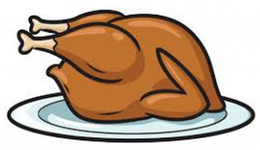
Sheffield Children's NHS
NHS Foundation Trust

SLEEPY FOODS zzZ

There are a variety of food groups which can assist with improving sleep. All of the foods below contain an essential amino acid called tryptophan which may help to aid sleep.

- **Bread -** whole wheat bread 
- **Fruits -** apples, bananas, blueberries, strawberries, avocados, pineapple, peaches, cherries 
- **Seeds -** ground flax, sesame, pumpkin, sunflower seeds
- **Nuts -** walnuts, peanuts, cashews, pistachios, chestnuts, almonds
- **Cheese -** cheddar processed cheese, cottage cheese, tofu 
- **Fish -** cod, tuna, mackerel, salmon
- **Vegetables -** spinach, asparagus, broccoli, green peas, tomatoes, cabbage, cauliflour, mushrooms, cucumber, potatoes 
- **Milk and milk products -** traditional milk products (warm), yoghurt, soya milk
- **Meats -** chicken, turkey 
- **Legumes -** mung bean, soybeans, kidney beans, lima beans, chickpeas
- **Grains -** wheat, brown rice, red rice, barley, corn, oats

What your child eats during the day impacts on their sleep at night. Avoid sugary snacks and anything containing caffeine, particularly before bed.

Referenced from The Sleep Children's Charity

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- **Almonds -** contain magnesium which promote both sleep and muscle relaxation. They also help to keep blood sugar levels stable overnight.

- **Bananas -** are an excellent source of magnesium and potassium. They also contain tryptophan an amino acid that helps us to sleep but don't forget fruit contains sugar too. Blend one banana with one cup of milk or soya milk to make an ideal bedtime drink.

- **Dairy -** such as yogurt, milk and cheese contain tryptophan helping us to nod off more easily. Calcium is effective in stress reduction, and – despite what you've heard - cheese doesn't give you nightmares!

- **Oatmeal -** makes an excellent suppertime choice, it's cheap and easy to prepare and has sleep inducing qualities. It's rich in calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, silicon and potassium, all of which can help to promote better sleep. You could even add some banana on top.

- **Cherries -** particularly tart cherries have been found to naturally boost melatonin production. Drinking a glass of cherry juice (available at most natural food shops) has been proven to aid sleep. Alternatively try a serving of fresh, frozen or dried cherries before bedtime.

- **Cereal -** is not only a healthy snack, but it may also help you snooze. Complex carbohydrate-rich foods increase the availability of tryptophan in the bloodstream. Avoid sugar coated cereals though, these will give your child a sugar rush and wake them up!

Referenced from The Sleep Children's Charity