Commonly Seen Herbs in the Sleep Lab

Matricaria Chamomilla (Chamomile)
Indications and Usage: Insomnia, Cold, Cough, Sedative, Anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, antimicrobial. **Sleep Effects:** Sedative

Tanacetum Parthenium (Feverfew)
Indications and Usage: Can be a stimulant or a tranquilizer, Migraine headaches. **Sleep Effects:** Varied

Paullinia Cupana (Guarana)
Indications and Usage: Used by athletes and in folk medicine as a stimulant and a tonic.
Stimulating and diuretic effect from caffeine. **Sleep Effects:** Sleeplessness

Humulus Lupulus (Hops)
Indications and Usage: Nervousness and insomnia. **Actions:** Sedative, Hypnotic, Antiseptic, Astringent. **Sleep Effects:** Use as a sleep aid also for anxiety and restlessness.

Piper Methysticum (Kava-Kava)
Indications and Usage: Nervousness and insomnia. **Sleep Effects:** Sedation, Somnolence

Cola Acuminata (Kola)
Indications and Usage: Lack of stamina for mental and physical fatigue. Used in sports for both its strong CNS stimulation and diuretic effects. **Sleep Effects:** Sleeplessness- Difficulty falling asleep and nervous states of restlessness.

Lavandula Angustifolia (Lavender)
Indications and Usage: Insomnia, nervousness and appetite loss. **Sleep Effects:** Somnolence-Sedative

Ephedra Sinica (Ma-Huang)
Indications and Usage: Stimulant, Bronchodilatation in respiratory diseases. **Sleep Effects:** Sleeplessness, restlessness

Cannabis Sativa (Marijuana)
Indications and Usage: Hypnotic/Insomnia, Antiemetic, Analgesic, Anticonvulsive, Bronchial dilation, Reduces intraoccular pressure, Antimicrobial, Appetite stimulant, Neuralgia, Anecdotal evidence: a stabilizer in Bipolar Disorder, relieves side effects of drugs such as interferon (hepatitis C treatment) and lithium (Bipolar Disorder). THC is considered an immunomodulator, which either enhances or diminishes the immune system. **Sleep/Neuro Effects:** EEG tests of chronic marijuana users and nonusers can not be distinguished. By computer-generated quantitative analysis (QEEG) differences have been found in the distribution of certain frequencies between heavy and occasional users (unknown significance). Other studies have found the difference in QEEG relatively small in pure cannabis users. Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) has been shown to be a serotonin uptake inhibitor much like Prozac. This shows promise in people with Alzheimer's disease. It may also act as a neuroprotective antioxidant.
Ingredients in marijuana have been shown to increase cerebral blood flow and enhance cortical activity. **Sleep Effects:** Somnolence

Ilex Paraguariensis (Maté)
Indications and Usage: For energy, mental and physical fatigue. **Sleep Effects:** Stimulant

Leonurus Cardiaca (Motherwort)
Indications and Usage: Sedative, Arrhythmia, cardiac insufficiency, flatulence. **Sleep Effects:** Sedative, Somnolence

Passiflora Incarnata (Passion Flower)
Indications and Usage: Nervousness, Insomnia. **Actions:** Sedative, Hypnotic, Anti-spasmodic **Sleep Effects:** Increase sleep time

Scutellaria Lateriflora (Skullcap)
Indications and Usage: Actions: Sedative, anti-spasmodic, nerve tonic. **Sleep Effects:** Sedative, Somnolence

Hypericum Perforatum (St. John's Wort)
Indications and Usage: Insomnia, Depression. **Actions:** Mild antidepressant, Sedative, Anxiolytic. St. John's Wort has been shown to be as effective as the older tricyclic antidepressants. Inhibits the reuptake of serotonin, anti-inflammatory, Inhibiting monoamine oxidase (MAO). **Research:** The NIH is conducting a study of St. John's Wort in comparison to a serotonin reuptake inhibitor and placebo. St Johns Wort has been shown to be an efficient herb in the treatment of seasonal affective disorder (SAD). This effect (antidepresant) may be potentiated with light therapy. **Sleep Effects:** Produces increase in "deep sleep". Does not appear to effect TST, latency or sleep maintenance. There is an increase in (SWS) with use of St Johns Wort.

Valeriana Officinalis (Valerian)
Indications and Usage: Nervousness and insomnia **Actions:** Sedative, Hypnotic, Antispasmodic, Hypotensive, Carminative. **Research:** Valerenic acid (a major constituent of Valerian) has been shown to inhibit enzyme- induced breakdown of GABA in the brain resulting in sedation. More recent studies have shown that aqueous extracts of roots contain appreciable amounts of GABA, which could directly cause sedation but there is some controversy surrounding the bioavailability of this compound. **Sleep Effects:** Shorter sleep-latency in people with long sleep latencies and more stable sleep in first quarter of night. Valerian seems to increase slow-wave sleep (SWS) and decrease stage I. Density of K-complexes was increased under active treatment. Valerian may increase SWS in subjects with low baseline values. People that feel they are good sleepers are unaffected by valerian vs poor sleepers who report improved sleep quality. Patients that experience nightmares with modern pharmaceuticals report their disappearance with the use of valerina.

Lactuca Virosa (Wild Lettuce)
Indications and Usage: Asthma, arteriosclerosis. **Actions:** Sedative, Hypnotic, Anodyne
Narcotic, analgesic effect and is reported to have a tranquilizing quality. **Sleep Effects:** Hypersomnolence

Pausinystalia Yohimbe
Yohimbe Bark
Indications and Usage: Yohimbe is used as an aphrodisiac, for sexual disorders, feebleness and exhaustion. Yohimbine an alkaloid in Yohimbe has been used to treat narcoleptics for excessive sleepiness. **Sleep Effects/Research** May be effective in treatment of narcoleptic hypersomnolence. May cause insomnia. ★