

Insomnia treatment

Check with your doctor if insomnia continues, especially if it is linked to changes in mood or difficulty in getting out of bed in the morning, as it could indicate other problems.

Do not rush to use sedatives, because it has the opposite effect later on, as it should be used for a short period and under the supervision of the attending physician.



Clinical contents from
Dr. Hassan Alhariri
Consultant sleep Medicine
Pulmonary & sleep medicine department

Insomnia is trouble falling asleep, staying asleep or to wake up in the middle of the night or early of the morning without the ability to go back to sleep.

Patients, who suffer from insomnia, wake up from sleep and remain inactive, and tired, which affects their performance during the day, the level of energy, mood, health, quality of work and quality of life.

Misconceptions about sleep:

- Average person needs four to nine hours of good quality sleep every 24 hours but the number of hours of sleep needed may vary individually.
- Many people believe that they need eight hours of sleep a day and if they increase the number of hours of sleep then it would be healthier however, this is not correct. For example, if you sleep for only five hours at night and feel very active the next day then you do not suffer from sleep problems.
- Some people attribute the lack of performance and failure in tasks of life to the lack of sleep, which leads to over-focus on the need to sleep for more hours and this focus, prevents the person from getting restful sleep at night and cause insomnia.

Insomnia



Sleep disorders
Center

Forms of insomnia

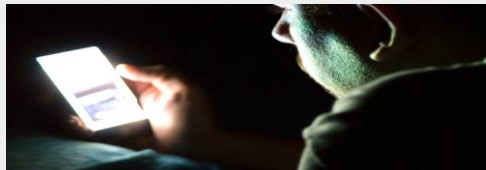
- Acute or short-term insomnia: It is often caused by ongoing stress and tension. When the stressful situation eases up or the person adjusts to it, sleep usually return to normal.
- Chronic insomnia: occurs because of organic disease.
- Insomnia due to medications: that may include antidepressants, medicine to treat heart disease, blood pressure, allergies, and stimulants. It is known that caffeine-containing beverages are stimulants too.
- Insomnia due to psychiatric problem: When we talk about mental disorders, we do not mean that the patient is mentally ill or crazy, but rapid change in the lifestyle has predisposed individual to psychological pressure that may affect sleep negatively and cause insomnia.

How to sleep well

- Avoid smoking, especially before going to sleep because it has a stimulant effect.
- Avoid ingestion of caffeine (coffee, tea, cola chocolate etc.) within 6 hours of bedtime.
- Avoid large meal because it keeps you awake. Light snack may help promote sleep.
- Drink a small amount of hot drink like warm milk, which increases the secretion of endorphins helping the natural sleep.
- Reduce fluid intake before going to bed, as it could lead to wake up in the night to go to the bathroom.

2

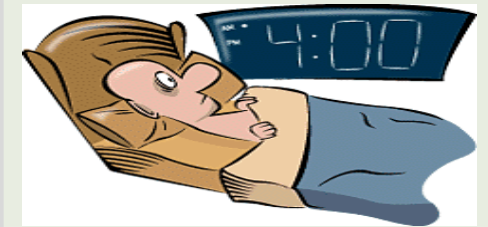
- Exercise regularly, exercise improve your health and help you sleep at night, it also protects you from many other diseases and obesity. Do not exercise at night (Exercise should be done in morning) as exercising one hour before the bedtime may prevent you from sleeping.
- Learn how to identify the sources of insomnia viz. anxiety and stress, and deal with them separately.
- Relax before bedtime. People who continue to work until the time of the sleep usually finds it difficult to sleep because the body did not get the relaxation that precedes sleep.
- Do not bring papers or laptop to bed and avoid watching TV before going to sleep.
- Switch off your mobile phones and do not allow anyone to disturb you.



- Avoid taking a nap in the late afternoon or evening, and do not take naps while reading, watching TV. If you need nap, try to have it in early afternoon and should not exceed 30 minutes.
- Try not to stay in bed sleeping more than eight hours, because sleep over (even if you think that you need), may adversely affect the sleep-wake system, and may lead to general fatigue during the day.

3

- Avoid forcing yourself to sleep; sleep does not come by force. Instead, focus on doing something relaxing like reading verses from the holy book to help you relax and go to bed when you feel sleepy only.
- If you cannot sleep after 15-20 minutes, leave the bedroom and go to another room and engage in a quiet activity (like reading), go back to bed only if you fell sleepy
- Hide the alarm if looking at it bother you. However, set the alarm clock to wake up in the morning.



- Try to maintain a regular sleep and wake up during the days of the week, even on weekends. Irregular habits may cause an imbalance in the "biological clock" in the brain, which is responsible for controlling the degree of awareness and the ability to sleep.
- Use the alarm clock and wake up on time every morning, regardless of the hours of sleep that night.
- You must have a comfortable environment (cool, quiet, dark room and comfortable mattress) for sleep. If you suffer from muscle pain, pain in the back, hip, shoulder or other orthopedic problems special quality of medical mattresses may help you sleep better.

4