

Insomnia

Symptoms

- Difficulty falling asleep
- Waking up early without being able to go back to sleep

Insomnia is a lack of sleep due to either difficulty getting asleep or difficulty remaining asleep. Insomnia is often a symptom of another health condition, such as anxiety, depression, restless legs syndrome, snoring, etc. If in general a few sleepless nights are not a major problem, when this becomes chronic, daytime fatigue, irritability and sensitivity to minor annoyances set in and decrease the quality of life.

Recommended products



Melatonin 3 mg and Extra Strength

Melatonin is a recognized treatment for insomnia, especially when it is due to variable schedules such as shift work or jet lag. It helps induce sleep quickly.

[learn more >](#)



Relaxen

If insomnia is due to stress, Relaxen will have a calming effect during the day and help fall asleep at night.

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Valerian

Valerian is a sedative plant that has a calming and relaxing action.

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Life's precious. Live it well.

AG
Adrien Gagnon



Diet

Who did not hear about the traditional glass of warm milk before bedtime? Although it is unclear what induces sleep in warm milk, this recipe is nonetheless effective. Other foods can impact sleep quality. Caffeine, sugar and strong spices can be too exciting, but other foods can help prepare the body for sleep. For example, foods high in complex carbohydrates supply an interesting amount of tryptophan, an essential amino acid involved in the synthesis of serotonin and melatonin hormones, which are involved in sleep. Tryptophan is also found in meat, but other amino acids can compete with tryptophan for absorption sites, so meats are not the best source of tryptophan for sleep support. Hence, the evening meal should be made of whole grain cereals, vegetables, cottage cheese, colostrums, soy, legumes and eggs and low in other meats.

An evening meal containing meat can also impair sleep due to the presence of tyrosine, another amino acid involved in hormone synthesis, more precisely adrenaline. Adrenaline does not favour sleep but puts us on an alert state. Spicy or hearty meals can also impair relaxation because they require a digestive effort, which is the opposite of what is needed to facilitate sleep. Indeed, the elevated metabolism that ensues for digesting a hearty meal elevates body temperature, while the ideal situation for sleep is a slight decrease in body temperature. On the other hand, low-calorie diets can reduce the ability of the brain to synthesize serotonin, hence reducing the ability to fall asleep. Moreover, hypoglycaemia at night can perturb sleep quality. Overall, on the diet side, an evening meal low in animal protein and high in complex carbohydrates is ideal to support sleep.

Basic advice

Develop a bedtime routine, in order for your body to enter sleep mode. Make your bedroom more suitable for sleep if possible, for example by having more opaque curtains, or by improving insulation to noises. Avoid eating stimulants after noon, such as ginseng-containing natural health products or caffeine, to ensure their effect is gone by bedtime. A 20-30 minute exercise session will also help burn some more energy, so your body will be more prone to sleep at night.

