

# A Guide for Insomnia and Other Sleeping Disorders

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Sleeping disorders caused by complex biological, physiological and psychological problems and if you are suffering from the problem for long time you should seek a treatment with a sleeping disorder specialist (talk to your GP first). Prescribed or over the counter sleeping remedies are a short term solution, but can create long term dependency, which is a problem on its own. The following is a basic psychological and behavioural guide to support the work that you are doing on your sleeping disorder with your CBT therapist.

- Keep regular sleeping hours. Going to bed and getting up at approximately the same time seven days a week all year round, will train your mind to relax and achieve an high quality sleep.
- Train yourself to sleep at least six to eight hours each day. Your body and mind daily wear and tear get repaired during the hours of sleep and average repair work takes a continues six to eight hours a day. A body and mind repair is been minimised by splitting your sleeping hours (e.g. two hours sleep in the mid day and four at night).
- Create a relaxing and restful environment in your bedroom. The following will give some ideas on how to active it.
  1. Make sure your bedroom is not too hot nor too cold. Ideal temperatures are 19C to 21C (67F to 70F).
  2. Keep the bedroom quiet and dark during hours of sleeping.
  3. Decorate the bedroom with calming colours and calming furniture.

4. Invest your money in a high quality bed and bed sets.
5. Use lavender smell in your bedroom, which has a calming effect on the mind.

- Treat your bedroom as a place to relax, to sleep and to have sex. Dont work, study, watch television, receive telephone calls or surf the internet in your bedroom.
- Calm yourself by going for a short walks, swimming, yoga, listening to calming music, watching comedies on television or at the cinema, etc. at the end of your working day, but not to close to your bed time.
- Cut down or stop taking stimulants such as coffee, black tea, cigarets, alcohol, etc. at least five hours before bed time.
- Have hot milky drinks, relaxing herbal drinks or hot chocolate before bed time.
- Be rational about the hour you wish to go to bed. If you are an early morning person by your nature, you need to go to bed early (e.g. 10 pm) than those who are late morning people (e.g. 11.30 pm).
- If you cant sleep dont stay in bed, fighting your insomnia. Get up out of bed if 20 to 30 minute as gone by and you are not a sleep yet. Keep yourself doing boring things (e.g. ironing, watching boring TV, reading boring book, etc.) and go back to bed only when you cant keep your eyes opened.
- Think rationally, stop any demanding thoughts that may get you anxious, stressed or depressed. Stop catastrophing your sleeping problems that make everything much worst than it is.

I hope that the above gives you some ideas to practice, so stop thinking about it so much and start practising the above guide. Do not expect immediate results and do not stop practising just because it is hard to get the results you are looking for.