

## **WHAT IS INSOMNIA?**

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Insomnia is the experience of unsatisfactory sleep, which can include difficulty falling asleep, difficulty maintaining sleep, or not feeling rested despite an adequate opportunity to sleep.

### **What are the effects from not getting enough sleep?**

Insomnia has been associated with impaired daytime thinking, and memory function. At work, poor sleepers were found to have more work-related problems, such as increased work absences, decreased job performance, and difficulties in handling stressful situations. Insomnia can also result in increased rates of motor vehicle and other accidents.

### **Some tips to help you if you are experiencing insomnia:**

1. Do not use over-the-counter medications (such as benadryl) unless your doctor recommends that you do.
2. Tell your doctor about not getting enough sleep so he or she can evaluate you and exclude any treatable medical conditions which can result in disturbed sleep. Such conditions include cardiopulmonary disease, and for men, prostate problems.
3. Change your lifestyle to promote good sleep:
  - Avoid caffeine, especially in the afternoon.
  - Avoid alcohol before bedtime.
  - Avoid tobacco and any other stimulating drugs at bedtime.
  - Exercise regularly.
  - Try eating a light snack before bedtime, not a heavy meal.
4. Improve your sleep environment:
  - Keep your bedroom temperature cool, not cold.
  - Keep your bedroom dark and quiet.
  - Use a comfortable mattress.
5. Slow down your mind at bedtime:
  - Do not go to bed until you are sleepy.
  - Do not use your bed for anything except sleeping or sex.
  - If you are not asleep after about 20 minutes, leave the bedroom and do something relaxing. Do not watch TV.
  - If necessary, get up after each attempt to sleep if it is not successful after about 20 minutes.
  - Get up at the same time every day.
  - Do not take naps.