

Natural Cures For Insomnia
Finally getting that much needed sleep ...

Natural Cures For Insomnia

learn the natural way to get
the sleep you need



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Introduction

Physically, you are completely worn out and wish for nothing more than a good night's sleep. However, once in bed, you toss and turn, sometimes not getting a wink of sleep all night. Even when you finally think you are able to get some sleep, you awaken to find that you have been asleep for only about an hour.

You can't seem to concentrate on your work either. You are very irritable and moody. After a few nights of not being able to sleep, you seem completely withdrawn from others and are constantly depressed. Not to mention that with your lack of attention at work, your boss is probably after you as well.

Sound familiar?

If this has been happening on a regular basis, you could be suffering from insomnia.

Rest assured that having insomnia is very common. This does not mean you are weird or crazy, it simply means that you have a problem, and that you need to identify what factors are causing you to lose sleep before establishing how you can overcome them to finally get that much needed snooze.

How do you judge the severity of your insomnia? If you find yourself not being able to get that much needed few hours more than 3 times a week and this goes for more than a month, then you are suffering from chronic insomnia that you need to look into. Anything less is known as short term or acute insomnia, which can still badly affect you despite perhaps sounding less severe.

Let's get a better understanding of the definition and type of insomnia you actually have. Clinically, **two types of insomnia** have been identified. The world we live in and the stress that comes as part of it often brings on 'secondary insomnia'. This is the most common type of insomnia and based on research done by the [National Heart Lung and Blood Institute](#), it can affect as many as 8 out of 10 people.

How is secondary insomnia different from primary insomnia?

Secondary insomnia indicates that the insomnia you have is being caused by factors that are related to emotional, neurological or medical disorders that you are already having. These can include:

- Another illness or condition that you already have (most commonly related to arthritis, heart and lung conditions). Neurological disorders such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's can also cause secondary insomnia;

- Emotional factors such as post traumatic stress syndrome, or anxiety or depression related to incidents in your work or personal life;
- Your consumption of tobacco, alcohol or coffee. These may be wonderful to consume, especially as they probably appear unlikely to actually cause your sleep to falter, but they do;
- Medication that you are already taking for other conditions that might have an adverse side effect on your sleep or, in this case, the lack of it.

On the other hand, primary insomnia is not brought on by any single factor and is a condition in itself that lasts up to a maximum of one month. While a number of life changes such as emotional upsets, travel, or even changed sleeping habits (particularly what time you go to bed) can be related to primary insomnia, there is no fixed factor as to why primary insomnia comes and goes.

Although it may seem easier said than done, curing or improving secondary insomnia can be done given time, although this depends on how soon the causes can be determined and eventually eliminated.

There is the quick fix of going to a doctor to get medication, but this may do more to mask the condition than get rid of it.

You don't want to take pharmaceuticals anyway, do you?

You would prefer a natural cure, which is exactly what this book is going to show you in the hope that, by doing so, it will help ensure that you get that much needed sleep!

Being sure ...

Even after reading the symptoms and causes, you are probably still not sure if insomnia is what you have. Here is a list of things that you can consider as a way of trying to confirm your condition before we actually move on to how we can cure it.

Ask yourself the following questions:

- How long has this condition existed and how frequently does it occur?
- Are you on any medication and why?
- What time do you normally go to bed? Is the timing consistent or does it vary? If it does vary, why does that variation happen?
- Do you feel well refreshed when waking up, or are you tired throughout the day?
- Do you have problems carrying out simple day to day tasks?
- What do you do before you tuck yourself in? Is there a specific routine or does this vary as well?
- What does your diet contain, especially towards the evening? Do you consume heavy dinners? Are you in a job that requires you to entertain with rich meals, alcohol and late hours?
- Do you snore and does this happen on a regular basis?
- Do you find yourself waking up midway through the night, gasping for air?
- Do you worry about falling asleep?
- Are there distractions such as traffic outside, noisy neighbors, etc that keep you from falling asleep?
- Are you anxious, depressed or easily irritable during the day, and is this as a result of or is it causing your lack of sleep?

If you find yourself nodding in agreement with more than one of the points above, then you certainly have a sleeping problem. Keep reading to make sure you get to understand your problem better, so that you can also grab a better sleep.

On the other hand, if you are not able to identify any of these points in yourself, then get your sleeping partner or a friend to help you and see what you come up with between the two of you.

Who gets insomnia?

Insomnia does not discriminate. Statistics from the [National Heart Lung and Blood Institute](#) indicate that one in three adults are occasionally susceptible to insomnia, while one in ten adults have chronic insomnia. Insomnia can occur at any age, but women appear to suffer from the condition more than men.

In general, categories of people who are more likely to suffer from insomnia include those who are under a lot of stress (be it work or personal matters), those forced to tolerate irregular working hours such as shift workers or those who work at night, and those who travel long distances frequently to places with time changes.

Why do you need sleep?

Before beginning to look at the various natural cures and treatments that you can consider using to combat your insomnia, let us examine why sleep is important in the first place.

You must be sure that you are actually getting enough sleep. As you get older, you need less sleep, but an average adult needs a solid 7 to 8 hours of sleep every day.

While some people can feel refreshed with as little as 5 to 6 hours of sleep every night, the number of sleeping hours your body actually needs also depends on what you do during the day to some extent.

If you are wondering if sleep is a necessary part of survival, it most certainly is. Resting your body also means resting your mind. Very simply put, sleep presents a chance for your body to repair itself, renewing cells and rejuvenating you.

Curing Insomnia, Naturally

While you can always opt for medical treatments, doctors and pills are known to relieve this condition for a short while only. In addition, pharmaceutical chemicals often have unpleasant side effects and it is possible that you would then need more pills to counter these side effects.

If you are looking at relieving your insomnia on a long term basis without invasive chemicals, what you need are natural treatments instead of expensive medical bills. While natural cures do come in the form of scents, herbs and alternative treatment methods, bear in the mind that the natural way also includes lifestyle changes that you should consider making.

Room Conditions

This is the first and most important 'ingredient' in the mix that ensures a good night's sleep. Many people assume that as long as there is a bed to lie down in, sleep will come. That is wrong, because what is around you also has an affect.

For one thing, study your room temperature. Are you really comfortable sleeping in its present ambient temperature? Does your room need more ventilation?

If the windows do not ventilate the bedroom adequately, you could try leaving the door open during the day or installing a ventilating fan in addition to an air conditioner or ceiling fan that you already have.

Talking about ceiling fans, make sure the one you have is not one that creaks with every turn. The creaking itself is enough to keep you awake through the night although you may not be consciously aware of it. The thing to do is remove any items that make distracting noises.

While you may not be aware of these noises during the day, they will become much more apparent at night when everything else is quiet. This includes ticking clocks or air fresheners that make noises.

In the recent past, it has become the habit of an increasing number of hard-pressed people to "get some work done" while in bed, just before shutting their eyes. If you are having sleep problems, this is just about the worst thing that you can do.

Your bedroom is meant for sleep, relaxation and renewal. Carrying the pressure of a deadline (be it in the form of a laptop or paperwork) to bed with you is going to put even more pressure on you. No matter how important the deadline is, ignore it and make sure that you set aside some other space in your home to get your work done.

Even if you have a small studio apartment, assign a table or a workstation away from your sleeping area. If you have a desktop computer, television or a powerful stereo in your bedroom, have these removed. A stereo can be kept in your room if you are using it to play soft, soothing music that will induce your sleep, but anything else is an interruption you do not need.

How bright is bright? When it comes to a bedroom, the less light there is, the better it will allow you to rest. If you have windows that have street light streaming in, opt for thick curtains that will shut light out.

This also applies if you work the night shift and need your sleep during the day, because room darkening curtains that will keep the sunlight out of your room are needed. You can also get an eye mask that helps keep the light out. There are various kinds including those that come with eye gel or aromatherapy oils which also help to soothe your tired eyes, giving you a better chance of sleep.

Thinking about the 'brightness' of your room also includes making sure you have the right color of paint on your bedroom walls. You should also note the colors of your sheets. While bright colors might represent the passionate personality that you know you have, think again when picking bright, bold colors for your bedroom. Soothing tones of cream, vanilla, baby shades or plain white exude calmness which will help a great deal in getting some much needed sleep.

Also known as **Chromatherapy**, the notion of careful color selection is based on the idea that the seven rainbow colors have healing energies that ensure you retain optimal health. Believe it or not, selecting the right colors can make a big difference to your sleep. Below is a list of the colors and the feelings they can induce, as described in an ancient system of Indian medicine, Ayurveda. Decide what suits your personality and how you can introduce it to your sleeping area:

- **Violet** can enlighten you while providing you with spiritual awakening. It is also known to soothe and relax your muscles while calming your nervous system.
- **Indigo** sedates and calms you while giving you a sense of intuition. Incidentally, it helps to control bleeding.
- **Blue** induces communication and knowledge while eliminating toxins which can in turn promote better liver functions.
- **Green** is associated with having balance. Ayurvedic practitioners use green to treat bacterial functions as well.

- **Yellow** is often associated with wisdom and clarity. It also provides properties that stimulate the digestive and lymphatic systems.
- **Orange** can induce pleasure, sexual stimulation and enthusiasm. Traditionally, it is believed that it eases the digestive system.
- **Red** exudes energy and passion. In some cases, it is believed (although not medically proven) that it can improve circulation while stimulating red blood cell production as well.

Viewed from the opposite perspective, some people have trouble sleeping in a completely pitch dark room. It makes them feel disoriented. Opt for a small light to be switched on. If you have a connecting bathroom, leave the light on or get a night light. The soft light will not affect your sleep, unlike a regular fluorescent light that can keep you awake more than you should be.

Now that you have considered what to do inside your room, let's take a look outside to consider what external factors might be disturbing you.

Is your bedroom located within hearing distance of a road with heavy traffic? Perhaps you have noisy neighbors who wake up earlier than you and become a distraction?

There is a simple way of getting around noise that you cannot control. Go to your nearest pharmacy and purchase ear plugs. There are several kinds available and they are very reasonably priced. Some may seem a little uncomfortable at first but you can keep trying out a few until you find those that are a comfortable fit.

Routine, Routine, Routine!

If you look back at your childhood days, one of the reasons why you generally slept so well is because you had a fixed routine. There was meal time, play time and sleep time. As a grown adult, you need fewer sleeping hours than in your childhood days, but the sense of routine must still be there.

Look at your daily schedule - that will probably revolve around traveling to and from work, work itself, your meal times etc.

Try to fix the same time for waking up and going to bed every day. This will help your body to automatically adjust to a proper sleeping schedule and you will find it easier to get some sleep after sticking to this routine for some days. Ideally, try to be in bed by 10pm at the latest. This should easily give you, your body and your mind the 8 hours rest that is needed.

The routine does not have to be rigid. There will be some late nights and Sunday mornings or off days when you can have a no alarm day

and just rest a little longer, but you **MUST** establish a fixed routine that you stick to most of the time if you really want your insomnia to be relieved.

A routine for meal times will also help your body rest and to get into a sleeping mode.

Consume a medium to heavy breakfast, a middle sized lunch and a light dinner. Heavy dinners only stress out your digestive system and a heavy stomach will not let sleep come easy. We will go through the types of food that are best to get you sleeping a little later.

Getting Comfortable in Bed

No one will be able to help you more on this particular requirement than yourself. You have to decide on what makes you most comfortable when going to sleep, be it clothing or the size of the bed.

Sometimes, insomnia occurs when you have just moved to a new place. Look at what it is that is making you uncomfortable. Is it the size of the bed? Regardless of whether it is a single, queen or king size, it does matter if it makes you physically or mentally uncomfortable.

Feel your mattress. A mattress that is too thick or too thin can also adversely affect your sleep, so try to pick one that is comfortable for you and supports your back.

Spending a little more on a higher quality mattress will definitely provide you with the sleep that you need. If you do find that your mattress is comfortable but you still have problems sleeping then make sure to turn over your mattress at least once every couple of weeks. This ensures that the mattress does not sink in only one area. That is important because that can make it uncomfortable very quickly.

This also applies to your pillows. The saying "to each his own" also applies when choosing what your head rests on. Regardless of whether you prefer pillows that are soft, hard, filled with feather or cotton - it does not matter. Pick one that you like.

Ideally, try to sleep using just one pillow – two is likely to be too high and could hurt your neck – and then perhaps supplement that with throw cushions or a bolster to hold on to if necessary. But do make sure your bed does not become so cluttered that you begin to feel cramped in the very space that is supposed to make you relax.

The material and thickness of your sheets and blanket also plays a role in ensuring better sleep patterns ...