

HEALTH REALLY MATTERS

Insomnia: From A to Zzzzzzzzzzz

Quick Facts about Insomnia

- Adults normally need between 6 – 9 hours of sleep per night.
- Up to one-third of adults report insomnia symptoms.
- Insomnia or poor sleep is usually a sign that something else is going on. It is important to find the cause of poor sleep.
- Stress, anxiety and depression are the most common causes of insomnia.
- People may have trouble falling asleep, staying asleep or waking up too early in the morning.

Obstructive Sleep Apnea

- Can result in poor sleep and daytime drowsiness and has been diagnosed in over 3% of adult Canadians.
- People with sleep apnea usually snore loudly and may stop breathing for several seconds throughout the night.

- People may feel tired during the day, it can also lead to changes in mood, heart problems or other medical conditions.
- A sleep study can help to show if you have sleep apnea.

You can improve your sleep with these healthy habits

- Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
- Avoid caffeine and alcohol for several hours before bed.
- Limit screen time (TV, phone, ipad) before bed
- Try not to nap during the day, if you do keep it to less than 20 minutes.
- If you are up at night worrying, keep a pen and paper by the bed so you can write down your thoughts.
- Try to reduce noise and light in the bedroom
- Hide the clock! Looking at the time can make it harder to get to sleep.
- Exercise helps but try not to work out too close to bedtime.
- Use the bed for sleep and sex only, try not to spend much time in bed if you aren't sleeping.



MEDICINE CENTRE
PHARMACY

Treatment

- Relaxation training, breathing exercises, mindfulness and meditation techniques can help some people.
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) can help you learn new sleep habits and ways to think about sleeping.
- Non-prescription medicines for sleep usually contain an antihistamine. They are not very effective and should only be used for a short time. People with certain medical conditions should avoid them.
- Natural Health products like melatonin can be helpful to manage jet lag.
- Prescription medications are safest when used for a short time. They can help you sleep but may cause daytime drowsiness and can be habit-forming.

Your Pharmacist can

- Review your medications to make sure they aren't causing insomnia.
- Help you to manage conditions like pain, restless legs syndrome or sleep apnea that might prevent you from getting a good night's sleep.

- Discuss benefits and possible side effects of the different medicines and work with you and your doctor to help you get the most out of them.
- Help you with a plan to reduce your use of medicines for sleep.

Find more great information and tools here

- HealthLink BC: <http://goo.gl/Ksb53q>
- Should I Take Sleeping Pills? <http://goo.gl/4QLCP1>
- The Canadian Sleep Society: <http://css-scs.ca>
- Strategies for shiftworkers: <http://goo.gl/zrSTCY>
- Sleep and depression: <http://goo.gl/c48uM8>
- UBC Sleep Disorders Program: <http://goo.gl/uP1O46>
- Obstructive Sleep Apnea: <http://goo.gl/M7sVu6>
- MedSchool for you—Insomnia: <http://goo.gl/YRSEhb>

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