

# Insomnia

#### What is Insomnia?

Insomnia is a sleep disorder that makes falling asleep, staying asleep or both difficult, waking up too early or experience poor sleep quality, leaving you feeling unrefreshed and having low energy.

### Signs and Symptoms

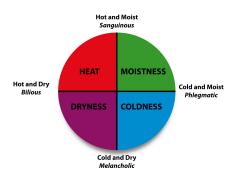
Difficulty falling asleep at night; difficulty staying asleep during the night; waking up too early; feeling unrefreshed and not rested after a night's sleep; lack of physical or mental energy; feeling tired and sleepy during the day; irritability, depression, anxiety; lack of concentration and memory problems; and tension headaches.

### **What Causes Insomnia?**

A number of factors that contributes towards insomnia. Common ones include: **Psychological:** Mental or physical stress, especially anxiety and depression; **Medical Conditions:** over-active thyroid, acid reflux, chronic pain, arthritis and frequent urination. **Poor sleep hygiene:** Mental overstimulation at night, for example from reading books or watching TV; an inappropriate or unsuitable sleep environment; using the bed for activities other than sleep or sex. **Medication:** Regular use of certain antidepressants, antihistamines, Ritalin, steroids and nasal decongestants. **Stimulants:** Caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol; certain foods and drinks; eating before bedtime or eating a big meal at supper time. Insomnia is also more prevalent with increasing age, as there is a shift in quality towards dryness.

#### The Tibb View of Insomnia

According to Tibb philosophy the quality associated with the brain is **moistness**. This is essential for the proper conduction of electrical impulses. Insomnia is associated with an excess of **dryness** in the body, especially that of the brain and its nerve pathways. If the weather and living environment are predominantly dry; if there is an excessive intake of spicy foods, meat; or if a hight level of mental stress from active thinking at night time exists, then insomnia is most likely to develop. Consuming coffee and caffeinated tea late in the day increases dryness in the body, and these habits predispose the person to insomnia. Although everybody will experiences bouts of



insomnia sometime in their lifetime, people with a dominant/sub-dominant melancholic or bilious temperaments are most predisposed to it, due to their inherent dominance of dryness.

### Management of Insomnia

Treatment and management is aimed at **reducing the excess dryness** associated with insomnia, by implementing Tibb Lifestyle Factors that will **increase the quality of moistness**. This assists Physis in addressing both the symptoms and the causes of insomnia.

# **Tibb Lifestyle Factors** Food and Drink

- Eat mostly Hot & Moist foods such as banana, sweet potato, and brown bread,
   followed by Cold & Moist foods like butternut, carrots, pumpkin and pears.
- Eat **less of Hot & Dry foods** such as avocado, garlic, onion and chickpeas, and the **least amount of Cold & Dry foods** like beef, tomato, beans and mealie meal.
- Eat a light supper at least three hours before going to bed.
- Avoid alcohol, tea, coffee and tobacco and spicy foods in the late afternoon and evening.
- In the evenings eat bananas, figs, dates, milk, and whole grain crackers. These foods are high in the essential amino acid tryptophan which promotes sleep.
- Avoid bacon, cheese, chocolates, eggplant, potato, sausages, tomatoes and wine close to bedtime. These foods contain the chemical tyramine, which increases the release of nor- epinephrine, a brain stimulant.
- Eat carrots, cucumber and lettuce with plain yogurt in a salad.

### Other Lifestyle Advice

- A small amount of alcohol can help induce sleep initially, but invariably disrupts sleep cycles later.
   While smoking may seem to have a calming effect, nicotine is actually a neuro-stimulant, and can cause sleep problems.
- Avoid taking nasal decongestants late in the day
- Establish a set of habits and follow them consistently to establish healthy sleep cycle.
- Go to bed only when you are sleepy.
- Do not stay in bed if you are not sleepy. Better to get up and read, watch TV, or do something quietly until you are feeling really sleepy.
- Use the bedroom only for sleep and sex, not for iPhones, tablets, reading, working, eating, or watching TV.
- Keep a regular sleep-wake cycle. Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time every day.
- Set an alarm clock and get out of bed at the same time every morning, no matter how you slept during the night. Once normal sleep patterns are re-established, there may be no need for an alarm clock.
- Sleep in a dark, quiet room with a comfortable temperature.
- Do not nap in the afternoon if this isn't a normal thing for you to do. Avoid napping, especially later than later afternoon.
- Keep the bedroom comfortable and quiet. If the room is too quiet, a running fan or quiet background music helps.
- Exercise regularly in the late afternoon or early evening, but not within 2 hours of bedtime. Physical
  exertion is an excellent way to tire the body, so sleep comes about more easily. Exercising five to six
  hours before bedtime can help you sleep more soundly.
- Breathe: inhale through left nostril slowly, hold for as long as possible, and breathe out through the mouth slowly. Repeat 5 times.
- Empty the bladder immediately before going to bed.
- Take a hot bath one hour or two before bedtime. For further relaxation, put several drops of soothing essential oils such as lavender or camomile in the bath water.
- Learn to put worries out of your mind by practicing meditation or visualisation.

#### Herbal Remedy

Drink 1 cup warm milk with 1tsp honey and two pinches of nutmeg powder, 30 minutes before bedtime. Apply lavender oil to the soles of the feet.

# **Cold & Dry Foods**

Meats	Vegetables	Fruits	Nuts	Grains & Seeds	Dairy Products	Oils	Spices & Herbs	Drinks	Flavourants	Condiments & Spreads	Confectionary & Desserts	Cereals	Dishes
beef	brussel sprouts	(all sour fruits)	peanuts	barley	sour cream	coconut oil	basil	coffee		balsamic		cornflakes	sour dishes
biltong (beef)	cabbage	green apples		beans(all types)	egg white	corn oil	tamarind	ice		vinegar		maltabella	
crabs	cauliflower	cherries, coconut		corn	sour milk	sesame oil		sour fruit juices		peanut butter		mielie meal	
fish	eggplant	china/dry fruit		couscous	yoghurt			tea (black)		pickles		millet	
knuckles	green beans	granadilla		lentils						tomato sauce			
mussels	mushrooms	grape fruit		maize						worcestershire			
ostrich	peas	lemon, lime		mielies						sauce			
oysters	potatoes	naartjies, oranges		popcorn						vinegar			
pork	sauerkraut	pineapple,plums		poppy seeds									
snails	tomatoes	prunes, pomegranate		samp									
snoek		raspberries		sesame seeds									
tripe		strawberries											
tuna		sultanas											

### **Cold & Moist Foods**

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duck	beetroot	apricot	macadamia	cucumber seeds	coconut milk		cardamom	milk shakes	fructose		custard	pronutro	
rabbit	baby marrow	cranberries		linseed	cow's milk		coriander	rooibos	glucose		ice cream	rice crispies	
	butternut	figs		melon seeds	goats milk		cumin	sugar cane	rose syrup		sago		
	broccoli, carrots	kiwi fruit		pumpkin seeds	buttermilk		vanilla	juice		1			
	cucumber	litchis, melons		rice cakes	butter			water					
	squash	mulberries		rice	margarine								
	lady fingers (okra)	pawpaw, pears		semolina	rice milk								
	lettuce	prickly pears			soya milk								
	pumpkin	quince											
	radish, sprouts	spanspek											
	soya beans	sweet apples											
	tofu												
	zucchini												

# **Hot & Dry Foods**

Meats	Vegetables	Fruits	Nuts	Grains & Seeds	Dairy Products	Oils	Spices & Herbs	Drinks	Flavourants	Condiments & Spreads	Confectionary & Desserts	Cereals	Dishes
all small bird	bitter gourd	avocado	cashews	celery seeds	eggs	mustard oil	aniseed	alcohol	pungent and	chilli sauce			spicy dishes
meat	celery	grapes	hazel nuts	chickpeas			cinnamon	grape juice	bitter	mustard sauce			
chicken	green pepper		pecan nuts	fenugreek seeds			cloves, garlic	herbal teas	flavourants	peri-peri			
lobsters	leek		walnuts	gram flour			green/red chilli	(see herbs)		sauce			
mackerel	onion			mustard seeds			fenugreek						
oily fish	red pepper			papad			lavender						
pilchards	yellow pepper						nutmeg						
prawns							oregano						
sardines							paprika						
							parsley						
							rocket, rosemary						
							saffron						
							tarragon						

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buck	artichokes	bananas	almonds	bread	clarified butter	castor oil	bay leaves	green tea	honey	mayonnaise	biscuits	all bran flakes	sweet dishes
goat	asparagus	dates	brazil nuts	bulgar wheat	condensed milk	olive oil	black pepper	hot water	molasses		cakes	bran	
goose	olives	guavas	pistachios	flour	cheese	sunflower oil	cayenne pepper	juices	salt		chocolate	honey smaks	
lamb	spinach	mangoes	apricot kernels	pasta	cream cheese		chives	(see fruits)	sugar		liquorice	muesli	
liver	spring onion	peaches		rye bread	mother's milk		ginger, fennel	herbal teas			vermicelli	nutri-k	
mutton	sweet potato	papaya		sunflower seeds	(for babies)		green masala	(see herbs)				nutrific	
turkey	turnips			wheat	fresh cream		marjoram					oats	
				macaroni			mint, sage					puffed wheat	
				dill seeds			soya sauce					taystee wheat	
							thyme,turmeric					weetbix	
							watercress						
							white pepper						