



---

## Insomnia Versus Good Night's Sleep

Dr Jyotika Rathore, Associate Professor,

Dept. of Psychology, NavyugKanya Mahavidyalaya, Lucknow (U.P.)

**Abstract:** *Insomnia is a sleep disorder in which people face trouble in staying asleep. The condition can be acute or chronic. It may come and go. Good night's sleep is a healthy sleep which provides energy to both our brain and body. But large no. of people suffering from sleep disorder like insomnia which can be acute or chronic in which it is hard to fall asleep and hard to stay asleep. Its physical and psychological symptoms are difficulty falling asleep at night, waking up during the night, waking up too early, daytime tiredness, irritability, depression, anxiety, difficulty in focusing or remembering, increased no. of driving accidents. Lack of sleep leads to health problems like diabetes, hypertension and weight gain. Behavioral and lifestyle changes like improvement in bed time routine can be helpful in getting better sleep. For chronic insomnia, behavior therapy and meditation are helpful.*

**Keywords:** Insomnia, Healthy Sleep, Good Night's Sleep

Sleep is the body's natural defense system against sickness. Sleep is a time for the brain and body for repairing itself. If we are getting 7 to 9 hours of sleep at night, we spend almost one third of our life sleeping or 250000 hours asleep (Konitz, Whiton, Albert, et al, 2015). Good quality sleep is essential for good mental and physical health and wellbeing. A good night's sleep or health sleep is when we fall asleep quite easily, never fully wake up during the night, never wake up too early in the morning and feel refreshed and always alert and ready to start the day. People with healthy sleep pattern find it easy to fall asleep and experience minimal night time awakening. Yet our family responsibilities, demanding work schedule, busy social life, hobbies and interests like online gaming, high attraction for technology based gadgets, addiction. In this age we can't imagine life without "Google". That's why many people are not having "Good night's sleep". If a person is facing such symptoms like feeling tired or sleepy during the day, awakening no. of times at night, reduced performance at work place or school, then these are the signs of poor sleep. They have weak concentration and judgement and have high risk of accidents. Poor sleep can also develop diabetes, obesity and heart diseases. Insomnia is one of the major cause of anxiety and depression (Martinez, K., 2022).

Healthy Sleep is called good night's sleep. It is essential for good mental and physical health. Sleep stages 1 to 4, REM sleep and deep sleep are most essential elements for staying healthy. These elements provide a natural defense system against sickness and gives energy to start a new day (Leavitt, 2019).



### **Good Night's Sleep**

If you are getting the recommended amount of sleep i.e. 7 to 9 hours a night, you are spending about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of your life asleep. Sleep is a time for the brain and body for repairing and growth. A good night's sleep is when you fall asleep quite easily, do not fully wake up during the night, do not wake up too early and feel refreshed, alert and ready to begin the day. People with healthy sleep patterns find it easy to fall asleep and experience minimal night time awakenings. Yet our family responsibilities, demanding work schedule, busy social life and hobbies like online gaming, attraction for technology based tools, many people are not having a "good night sleep". If a person is facing such symptoms like feeling tired or sleepy during the day, awakening no. of times at night, reduced performance at work place. These are the signs of poor sleep. They have weak concentration and have high risk of accidents. Poor sleep can also develop diabetes, obesity and heart disease. It can give birth to anxiety and depression. (Martiniz, K., 2022).

In the course of life, sleep patterns change. It is decided by our body clock. It tells us when to sleep and wake up. If we do not sleep for a long duration, the body starts giving signals of tiredness. Insomnia increases with age. Neonates sleep 18-20 hours per day, young children sleep for 9-10 hours, while teenagers require 8-10 hours sleep, adults require 7-10 hours a night but senior citizen suffer from light sleep.

Sleep psychology addresses many disorders like insomnia, narcolepsy, sleep cycle disorder, parasomnia and sleep related movement disorders.

Insomnia is a common sleep disorder that regularly affects millions of people worldwide that is characterized by difficulty:

- falling asleep initially,
- waking up during night,
- waking earlier than desired.

(Costa, 2020)

### **Types of Insomnia**

- Short term insomnia tends to last for a few days or weeks and is often triggered by stress.
- Chronic insomnia occurs when the sleep difficulties occur at least 3 times a week.

Doctors also classified insomnia by cause:

- Primary insomnia is an issue by itself.
- Secondary insomnia is a result of another health issue

In addition, they classified it by severity:

- Mild insomnia involves a lack of sleep that leads to tiredness
- Severe insomnia has a single impact on daily life.



Doctors also consider other factors when identifying the types of insomnia including whether a person consistently wakes up too early or has trouble:

- Falling asleep
- Staying asleep
- Getting restorative sleep

### **Common Causes of Insomnia:**

1. **Stress:** Our mind is always active due to family work, finance, health issues, etc. Sometime it is difficult to sleep due to death of loved ones, divorce and joblessness
2. **Work schedule:** Travelling across multi-time zones, working in late night shifts or early morning shifts or frequently changing shifts can lead to insomnia.
3. **Poor sleep habits:** Using bed for work, eating or watching TV, operating computers, playing video games, using smart phones or tabs or other screens interfere sleep cycles.
4. **Eating too much in late night:** Eating too much and oily food in dinner provides physical discomfort like acidity and gastric problems.
5. **Mental health disorders:** Anxiety disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, confusion and frustration.
6. **Medication:** Many drugs can disturb sleep cycle like anti-depressants, medicines of blood pressure, asthma, pain relief, allergy, cold and weight loss products containing caffeine.
7. **Medical Conditions:** Some medical conditions like chronic pain, cancer, diabetes, heart disease, asthma, over active thyroid, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's disease.

### **Health Issues due to Insomnia**

- Insomnia reduces anti bodies that help the body to fight infections
- Weak immune system
- Sensitivity to pain
- Obesity
- High blood pressure
- Risk of stroke and heart diseases
- Risk of asthma

### **Mental health issues due to insomnia**

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Confusion
- Frustration

(Adam, 1986)



### **Routine life issues**

- Performance at workplace
- Risk of accidents (Singareddy, 2012)
- Memory loss: Researches show that only 5 hrs. sleep at night can lead to poor judgement.
- Decreased sex desire: Chronic insomnia can affect hormones that control sex desire like testosterone. A man's body makes testosterone while he sleeps. Researches have found that losing sleep duration during the second half of the night reduces testosterone level in the morning.

### **How to defeat insomnia and get good night sleep?**

- Changes in lifestyle.
- Set a routine timing for sleeping and waking up.
- Comfortable sleep environment especially comfortable bed and pillow.
- Avoid drinking alcohol in the evening hours.
- Don't take heavy and large meals.
- Don't drink plenty of water at night and stop drinking water at least 2 hrs. before sleep.
- Quit smoking.
- Put away smart phones, TV, laptops or other screens at least 30 minutes before bed time.
- Turn the bedroom into a dark cool and quiet sanctuary.
- Smooth and sweat music and good books are great supporters of good night sleep.
- Meditation and some yoga exercises.
- Prescribed sleeping drugs like doxepin, zaleplon, etc. are helpful.
- Cognitive behavior therapy is helpful in chronic insomnia.



### **References:**

Adam, K., 1986. Physiological and Psychological difference between good and poor sleepers. *Journal of Psychiatric Res.* 20(4):301-316.

Costa, P., 2020. What is insomnia? Everything you need to know. [www.medicalnewstoday.com](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com)

Konitz, M.; Whiton, K.; Albert, S. M.; et al, 2015. National Sleep Foundation's sleep time duration recommendations: Methodology and result summary. *Sleep health* 1:40-3,doi:10.1016/J Sleep. 2014,12.010.

Leavitt, J., 2019. How much deep, light and REM sleep do you need? [www.healthline.com](http://www.healthline.com)

Martiniz, K., 2022. Effects of Insomnia on the body. [www.healthline.com](http://www.healthline.com)

Singareddy, R.; Vogntaz; A. N.; Fernandezmendoz, J.; Liao, D.; Calhoun, S.; Shaffen, M. Z.; et al. (2012), Risk factors for incident chronic insomnia: a general population prospective study. *Sleep Med.* 13(4): 346-353.