



# BalanceWorks® Newsletter

## Insomnia

Written by the work/life experts at eni.

The inability to fall asleep at night can be frustrating and can become much more serious than simply a lack of sleep. About 35 percent of people with chronic insomnia suffer from depression or anxiety. If you suffer from insomnia and have any of the following medical conditions, ask your doctor to discuss possible treatments.

### Respiratory Conditions

Allergies, asthma, bronchitis, and emphysema can interfere with your breathing at night and can cause you to awaken frequently. In addition, many medications used to treat these conditions cause insomnia. Ask your doctor to give you a dosage schedule that will help you sleep.

### Sleep Apnea

People with sleep apnea stop breathing for 10 to 60 second intervals for dozens to hundreds of times each night. Symptoms include: loud snoring, long pauses without breathing, gasp or forced inspiration while sleeping, daytime headaches, and chronic daytime fatigue. If untreated, apnea can increase risk of suffering high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. Ask your doctor what treatment is right for you.

### Heartburn and GERD

Heartburn can interfere with your sleep when stomach acid seeps into the esophagus, triggering

a reflex that wakes you up. To reduce heartburn, avoid coffee, alcohol, chocolate, high-fat, highly acidic foods, and eating late at night. Try to quit smoking as tobacco smoke weakens the esophageal sphincter.

### Arthritis

The pain and stiffness of arthritis often keep sufferers from sleeping well. Pain relievers and regular exercise that increase your joints' range of motion may provide relief. According to the National Sleep Foundation, as many as 75 percent of people with rheumatic or arthritic disorders often suffer from sleep problems.

### Medications and sleep

Many prescription and nonprescription medications can cause insomnia. Ask your doctor if you can change to a related drug, or alter the dosage or the time you take the medication, if you have sleep problems while taking medicines.

### Nicotine and Alcohol

Nicotine is a stimulant. Smokers experience nicotine withdrawal during sleep and can have difficulty falling asleep, and problems waking up. Alcohol may speed the beginning of sleep, but it increases the number of times you awaken in the latter half of the night.

It is important to find out the cause of your insomnia in order to get the right treatment, and being catching some sleep. Insomnia can be extremely exhausting, mentally and physically. If you are having trouble sleeping, ask your doctor to help you find out why. Treat your insomnia and sleep well.



For more information or advice about Insomnia, contact the work/life experts at BalanceWorks by calling **1.800.327.2255**.

eni's BalanceWorks program is a confidential 24-7 service provided by your employer to help achieve work/life balance.

# How to Sleep Well

Sleeping well is something most people take for granted until they are endlessly tossing and turning at night. Over 100 million Americans experience some type of sleeplessness. Your sleep problems may be attributed to many factors that, fortunately, can be modified for a better night's rest. Lifestyle changes that include the following remedies will help you sleep well.

## Changing patterns

Many people believe that sleeping poorly is just part of getting older. Realistically, those who fall asleep during the day do so because they lack quality sleep at night. Though the need for eight hours of sleep each night doesn't change with age, sleep patterns do. The body's circadian rhythm, a biological clock that controls sleep, naturally advances a few hours as a person grows older. When that happens, you may feel sleepy earlier in the evening and wake up earlier in the morning. By observing your natural sleep patterns and making lifestyle changes, you can help keep your internal clocks on time and overcome sleep problems.

## Sleep remedies

Sleep and aging experts agree that one's daytime activities and sleep environment are critical to getting a good night's sleep.



Try the following remedies if you have trouble sleeping.

- Stick to a regular sleep schedule. Try to go to bed and get up at the same time every day.
- Ask your doctor if any of your medications could be disturbing your sleep.
- Stay active. Maintain a moderate level of daily activity and do gentle exercise.
- Spend some time outdoors during daylight hours. Sunlight can help set your biological clock.
- Pay attention to what you eat and drink in the evening. Consuming foods and drinks that contain caffeine, such as coffee, tea or cola can interfere with nighttime sleep.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages in the evening. They can make you fall asleep faster, but they cause early morning awakenings and fitful sleep.
- Don't smoke. Smokers are more likely to have trouble sleeping than nonsmokers.
- Make sure your bedroom is dark, quiet and cool.
- Replace your mattress if it's lumpy, sagging or worn out. A comfortable mattress that offers good support can help you fall asleep and stay asleep.
- Ask a doctor for help if your partner snores or has an illness that disturbs your sleep.

Sleep problems can often be eased by using any of these tips. If your sleeping problems are more serious, you may be suffering from insomnia and should call your doctor for available treatments.

**For more information or advice about Sleeping Well, contact the work/life experts at BalanceWorks at 1.800.327.2255**

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