

Chronic Insomnia and Homeopathy

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ABSTRACT

Insomnia is a condition of inadequate quantity or quality of sleep. ^[1]

Now-a - days Insomnia is a burning health problem because of its high prevalence and management challenges. Despite its high prevalence and burden, the etiology and pathophysiology of insomnia are poorly understood. Insomnia is the most common type of sleep disorder in the population. Persistent insomnia leads to diminished quality of life, physical and psychological morbidity.

Diagnosis of insomnia and treatment planning rely on sleep history. Using a sleep diary or sleep log is more accurate than patient recall to determine sleep patterns. ^[2]

Our motto is how to improve quality of life and reduce long-term health issues.]

KEYWORDS: *insomnia, Electroencephalogram, Raphe nucleus, Locus ceruleus of pons*

Abbreviations: REM sleep, NREM sleep, > amelioration, < aggravation

INTRODUCTION

American Psychiatric Association (APA) defines insomnia as a disorder in which **people have trouble of falling asleep or staying** asleep. ^[3]

Clinical diagnosis of insomnia depends on: ^[4]

- Sleep difficulties occur at least three nights a week for a minimum of 3 months.
- Sleep difficulties create major distress or functional difficulties in a person's life.

Objectives to study insomnia include:

- Reduction of sleep and waking symptoms,
- Improvement of daytime activities and Reduction of distress.

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Knowledge about sleep and its mechanism helps us to handle insomnia cases very easily. So first go through sleep and its mechanism then insomnia and its management.

Gist of sleep: ^[5] It is the natural periodic state of rest for the mind and body with closed eyes characterized by partial or complete loss of consciousness.

Sleep is of two types:

- Rapid eye movement sleep or REM sleep
- Non-rapid eye movement sleep, NREM sleep, or non-REM sleep.

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|---|
| Rapid eye movement sleep – REM sleep | Non-rapid eye movement sleep – NREM sleep | | | |
| <p>This type of sleep is associated with Frequent rapid conjugate movements of the eyeballs, but the sleep is deep.</p> <p>It is about 20% to 30% of sleeping period.</p> <p>Functionally, REM sleep is very important for consolidation of memory.</p> <p>Dreams also comes during this period.</p> <p>Electroencephalogram (EEG) shows irregular waves with high frequency and low amplitude in REM sleep.</p> | <p>Eye movement is absent, dreams do not occur in this type of sleep and it is about 70% to 80% of the total sleeping period. Non-REM sleep is followed by REM sleep.</p> <p>Based on the EEG pattern NREM sleep has four stages, During wakefulness, which means lying down with closed eyes and a relaxed mind, the alpha waves of EEG appear.</p> | | | |
| | Stage I: Stage of Drowsiness | Stage II: Stage of Light Sleep | Stage III: Stage of Medium Sleep | State IV: Stage of Deep Sleep |
| | Diminished and abolished Alpha waves. Only low voltage fluctuations and infrequent delta waves are seen. | Stage II is characterized by spindle bursts at a frequency of 14 per second, superimposed by low-voltage delta waves. | The frequency of delta waves is only 1 or 2 per second and the amplitude is about 100 μ V. | Delta waves are more prominent with low frequency and high amplitude. |

Mechanism of sleep: ^[6]

Due to the activity of some sleep-inducing centers Sleep comes. Lesion of sleep centers causes sleeplessness or persistent wakefulness called insomnia.

Sleep centers: ^[7]

Complex pathways are formed by the Reticular formation of the brainstem, diencephalon, and cerebral cortex for the onset and maintenance of sleep.

- Raphe nucleus: Located in the lower Pons and medulla, release serotonin induces non-REM sleep.
- Locus ceruleus of Pons: released Nor-adrenaline causes REM sleep.

About insomnia:

Definition: Insomnia is a condition when there is a deviation of sleep pattern that may be the inability to fall asleep or stay asleep or there is a reduction in total time of sleep ^[8]

Types of Insomnia: ^[9]

Insomnia is of two types: primary and secondary.

- Primary insomnia: Only problem in sleep no other health problem.
- Secondary insomnia: due to other ill health, like cancer, asthma, depression, medication; or substance use (like alcohol).

Causes:

Primary causes of insomnia include: ^[10]

- Stress related to loss of job or change, the death of a loved one, divorce.
- Changes to your sleep schedule like a new shift at work,
- Research has found that a tendency for insomnia may run in families.

Secondary causes of insomnia include: ^[11]

- Health issues like cancer, thyroid disease.
- Psychological illness like depression and anxiety.
- Other ill health like high blood pressure, asthma, allergy.
- Medication include antidepressants, psychostimulants, steroids etc

Symptoms: ^[12]

- Sleepiness during the day.
- Fatigue.
- Difficulty in concentration and weak memory.

Complications: ^[13] Commonest complications are:

- A higher risk of falling, if you're an older woman.
- Trouble focusing.
- Anxiety.
- Crash due to slow reaction time.
- A higher risk of health problems like high blood pressure, obesity, and depression.

Intervention: ^[14]

Good sleep habits, so-called sleep hygiene, can help insomnia patients, they are :

- Go to sleep at the same time each night, and get up at the same time each morning.
- Try not to take naps during the day.
- Light must be off and phones do not use before bed.
- Avoid caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol late in the day.
- Regular exercise in daily life.
- Don't eat a heavy meal at night.
- Make your bedroom comfortable: dark, quiet, and not too warm or too cold.
- Follow a routine to relax before bed. Read a book, listen to music, or take a bath.

Treatment: ^[15]

Chronic insomnia needs treatment. Insomnia due to definite psychiatric illness treatment should be directed towards the underlying condition. Counseling, cognitive therapy, psychotherapy, behavioral therapy, and medication all have their place. These Patients are benefited by Homeopathic Medicine also. The most commonly applied medicines are as follows:

Medicine with Prescription totality: ^[16]

In spite of the common symptoms of Insomnia, if the case has shown uncommon, peculiar, characteristics symptoms of a particular medicine that acts as a specific remedy in that case. The following medicines are found effective with their prescribable totality:

| Medicine | Prescribable totality |
|-------------------|--|
| Natrum muriaticum | Weeps when alone not in front of others. Dreams of robbers in the house, waking and searching for them. Irritability. < by consolation. Craving for salt and a great aversion to bread. |
| Sepia | Occupation >. [17] Indifferent to those whom she loves best. Coldness vertex with headache. The sensation of a ball in the inner parts. |
| Causticum | Intense sympathy for others. Likes cloudy weather. Must move constantly but motion does not > Cannot cover too warmly, but warm does not >. ^[18] |
| Ignatia | Desire to stay alone. Involuntary sighing. Persons are mentally and physically exhausted by long-lasting grief. Contradictory symptoms in the mental and physical plane. |
| Lycopodium | Greedy and miserly people. A very sensitive patient even cries when thanked. The complaint goes from the right to the left side of the body. Headaches if he does not eat. Baby cries all day and sleeps all night. |
| Sulphur | Skin and hair dry unwashed appearance. Desire for sweets. Happy dreams wake up singing. Dirty, filthy people, prone to skin affection. Aversion to take a bath. Standing is the worst position for sulphur patients. |
| Acid phos | Prostrated stupefied with grief. Eyes sunken and surrounded by blue margins. Debilitated patient due to loss of vital fluids. |

CONCLUSION

Chronic insomnia is highly prevalent and affects approximately 30% of the general population. After Repertorization in most of the cases, polycryst medicines were indicated. General symptoms (Mental & physical) play a vital role in the selection of the specific medicine for each insomnia patient. The age group mostly affected is between 51 – 60 years. Homeopathic medicines are found to be very

effective in the management of chronic insomnia, by removing the specific cause or through constitutional treatment. Many of the patients were able to carry on with their daily activities after the treatment, which they could not do so before.

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