



live well, work well

Health and wellness tips for your work, home, and life—brought to you by the insurance and healthcare specialists at Moreton & Company.

Insomnia: Trouble getting some ZZZs?

As many as one in 10 Americans suffer from chronic insomnia. That means that a large body of the population suffers from the following sleeping problems: difficulty falling asleep, difficulty sleeping through the night, waking up excessively early and feeling fatigued during the day because of not being fully rested. These problems can lead to more serious issues such as depression or anxiety, high blood pressure and diabetes.

Causes of Insomnia

- Stress
 - Work, school, health and family concerns can keep the mind too active and unable to relax.
- Anxiety
- Depression
 - Worries that accompany the illness cause restlessness
- Stimulants
 - Many prescription drugs and over-the-counter (OTC) medications contain ingredients that can keep you awake.
- Environment and Schedule Changes
 - Changes can disrupt the body's natural clock (known as the circadian rhythm) and make it difficult to sleep when desired.

- Injuries and Illnesses
 - Excessive amounts of pain can keep the mind preoccupied
- Behavioral Insomnia
 - Worrying excessively that you will not be able to fall asleep
- Eating Too Late at Night

Diagnosis

If sleep difficulties occur for at least one month, contact your doctor to determine the cause of your problem. He/she may recommend going to a sleep disorder clinic to have various body activities monitored during the night. Functions such as brain waves, heartbeat and eye movements can explain why sleep patterns are irregular.

Treatment

There many treatment options for insomnia sufferers that will offer relief from this troubling problem. Many doctors recommend behavioral treatments (sometimes accompanied by medication) as an extremely effective means of changing sleeping patterns. In these

sessions, you are taught how to modify your behaviors and environment so they are more conducive to a good night's sleep. Here are some other treatments to consider:

- Wake up and go to sleep at the same time every day
- Do not try too hard to fall asleep; read a book or take a bath to get sleepy instead
- Hide the clocks in your bedroom so you're not preoccupied with the time
- Get 20-30 minutes of exercise daily at least five hours before bedtime
- Limit caffeine, alcohol and nicotine consumption
- Seek medical treatment for excessive pain that keeps you awake
- Do not take naps during the day



Did you know...?

According to the Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER), sleep medications are generally avoided as a treatment option for insomnia because they can cause some negative behavioral side effects and are habit-forming.