

Alternative Health: Are You Suffering From Insomnia?

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If you suffer from insomnia then you understand the seriousness of simply not getting a good night's sleep. Your whole world around you appears to crumble when you can't get a good 6-8 hours of quality deep REM sleep. Your work life, your family life all suffer.

Today's article will touch on a few "key" things to consider to solve insomnia.

To begin remember that the awakening after a few hours of sleep and not being able to get back to sleep is often rebound from what you ate or drank hours before. High sugar, alcohol, highly spiced foods and of course, caffeinated drinks are often the culprits.

If you are unknowingly deficient in chromium, vanadium, manganese and other nutrients you can experience hypoglycemic rebound in a few hours where you abruptly wake-up and are unable to drift back to sleep.

Let's now consider something called the "happy hormones" that lead to a restful sleep.

One of these hormones is **serotonin**, which anti-depressants like Prozac work on.

We make serotonin from the **amino acid tryptophan**.

Unfortunately as we age or faced with an overload of stress the level of serotonin suffers.

Dozens of studies show that low tryptophan levels lead to insomnia, awakening feeling unrested, inability to stay asleep after getting there, and just lying there all night watching the clock.

For over a quarter of a century literally dozens of studies have proven this amino produces a great sleep in many, and with no side effects or hangover. In fact, folks have better mental clarity during the day. Furthermore, it improves daytime depression, PMS, fibromyalgia, and anxiety as well as carbohydrate cravings, binge-eating and even alcohol recovery.

Now from a functional medicine position it is important to know that a simple B6 or zinc deficiency can contribute to insomnia. A common vitamin B6 deficiency can keep you awake all night, or low zinc causing impaired conversion of B6, which is **needed to make tryptophan work**.

If you have an elevated organic acid, **kynurenate acid**, for example, and a low tryptophan, the correction of B6 may be all you need.

Now don't forget plasticizers in our bodies lower zinc which is needed in the enzyme to convert B6 to its active form so it can then transform tryptophan to a serotonin.

I am disappointed with the number of people suffering with insomnia who could be helped if only their physician understood the significance of nutritional biochemistry.

It comes down to finding the cause of the cause.

Remember that as important as serotonin is for sleep and moods, most of serotonin is not made in the brain.

Ninety five percent of serotonin is made in the gut.

If the gut isn't healthy, then you are going nowhere. If you have gas, bloating, alternating diarrhea or constipation or other gut issues than your chances of solving your insomnia problem may be futile until you fix your gut.

The secret is to find a doctor who understands the probable underlying causes of insomnia and knows how to do the proper testing to discover what needs to be fixed.

It really can be as simple as that.

Dr. Badanek has been and currently is 37 years into active/private practice in the Ocala/Marion County, Florida region. Dr. Badanek practices Natural/Holistic Medicine through the use of Functional/Integrative Models for diagnostic and treatment protocols for the health challenged. Find him online at Dr.Badanek.com and www.alternativewholistic.com, and see what the facility has to offer the sick and health challenged. To schedule an appointment call 352-622-1151