

Sleep Loss Case Study

The following case study was provided by one of our clinicians and helps to identify some of the issues with insomnia and the clinical approaches that were valuable for her. She also discussed approaches to hormonal insomnia

35 year old Female with insomnia which continued for several months

She had just delivered her 4th child 3 weeks prior which was a very stressful delivery. She came to me for help because she would fall asleep for 2 hours and then would wake up and lie awake the rest of the night. When she woke up her heart felt like it was racing and she'd feel wide awake. Her resting heart rate was 120 beats per minute. Her nervous system was in a fight or flight mode. We needed to address this before a normal sleep pattern could be restored. She seemed to have symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The first problem we addressed was low blood sugar. We changed her diet and eliminated the refined carbohydrates. We increased high quality protein at each meal making sure she had protein at her dinner meal along with complex carbohydrates like vegetables and whole grains.

She avoided fruit and other foods which contain a high amount of natural sugars. At bedtime she placed a piece of string cheese or a little bit of cottage cheese next to her bed. Each time she woke up, which was every 2 hours initially, she ate a little of these foods and was able to fall back to sleep quickly. She started supplementing with GlucoBalance, 2 with each meal, a nutritional vitamin supplement that is really helpful to regulate blood sugar. Normally GlucoBalance is used for hyperglycemia; however, it can also be used for low blood sugar when insulin swings are a part of the clinical picture. We also supported her adrenal glands which control heart rate and the nervous system. ADHS, short for Adrenal Hypersecretor, is an adaptogenic herbal formula, and was used to normalize cortisol. The dose used was 4 with breakfast and 4 with lunch. Taking ADHS helped her heart rate return to normal. Because the nervous system and the hormonal system are the communication pathways in our body we suspected her progesterone might be imbalanced also. Progesterone has a relaxing effect and worked well to calm her down. It wasn't long and my client slept longer and eventually slept through the whole night.

Through the years of working in the alternative health field I have become convinced that a large percentage of people suffering from insomnia are at least partially due to functional hypoglycemia. .

Insights into Menopausal Insomnia;

One of the most difficult causes of insomnia happens during Pre and Post Menopause. Hormones are one of the body's main communication systems. To balance them requires more insight and patience. When hormones begin to fluctuate and go through the normal phase of Menopause many changes take place in the brain. The brain gets over excited and tries to com-

pensate for the changes. This can cause the Neurotransmitters in the brain to become imbalanced. Depression and other emotional problems are very common which exacerbates the insomnia problem. The stress protocol just discussed is extremely helpful during this time of life. I add BioPause-PM, 4-6 at bedtime and De-Stress, 4-6 at bedtime to this regime which seems to help. Dosage levels can be reduced as sleep is acquired. Sometimes it is necessary just long enough to break the cycle.

Other options to consider are:

VHP (Valerian, Hops, Passiflora) can also be used which helps calm the system down so one can relax.

St. John's Harmony (Folic acid, B12, St. John's Wort, Panax Ginseng) is useful for some people with mild depression, 3 capsules, 3 times per day

Many people experience having a hard time falling asleep, taking anywhere from 1-3 hours. In addition to an increased cortisol, another underlying issue often can be attributed to a sluggish or toxic liver. I've recommended a liver flush and NutriClear cleanse along with a few nutritional supplements and diet change. Bio-GGG- B has been very helpful for insomnia when it is contributed to liver issues. The dose is 2-3 each meal for a month or as needed along with the liver flush and Livitrit, 2-3 times per day. This is a formula that supports detoxification and liver support.

The following reasons can also play a part in insomnia.

1. Exercising later in the day is not a good idea if a good night sleep is desired. Exercising elevates the cortical steroids which is helpful to give energy during the day but not in the evening. The normal wake and sleep cycles are reversed and the cortical steroids don't drop low enough to be conducive to sleep.
2. TV, video games, bill paying or work in the evening can also keep us awake by stimulating cortisol.
3. Ingesting hidden stimulants in the form of caffeine, sugar laden foods or drink, diet drinks, can be a problem. For example one 12 cup of coffee from star bucks can raise cortisol levels for 24 hours. Someone who has limited inhibitory neurotransmitters/ hormones (i.e. GABA, serotonin, and melatonin) will have to be extremely discriminating in food and drink particularly after 12:00 p.m. For some people caffeine of any kind must be prohibited.