

COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT) FOR INSOMNIA

WHAT IS CBT FOR INSOMNIA?

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (or “CBT”) for Insomnia is an evidence-based “talk therapy,” or counseling treatment, for insomnia (difficulty falling or staying asleep). CBT for Insomnia teaches proven strategies based on sleep science for sleeping longer and better. This includes learning specific skills for changing thoughts and behaviors that affect how long and how well you sleep each night.

WHAT WILL I DO IN CBT FOR INSOMNIA?

First, you and your therapist will track how much you are sleeping and pinpoint the sleep problems that you are experiencing. Then, you and your therapist will work as a team to develop goals that will guide treatment. Over the next several weeks, you will learn specific strategies to improve your sleep and achieve your treatment goals. These strategies include:

- Learning Healthy Sleep Habits: Learn daily behaviors to better prepare yourself for sleep
- Re-Training Your Brain for Sleep: Train your brain to associate the bed with sleep and not with being awake
- Changing Negative Thinking that Interferes with Sleep: Learn skills to catch and change negative thoughts that interfere with sleep
- Learning Relaxation Skills: Learn effective relaxation skills to calm your mind and body for sleep

You and your therapist will come up with practice exercises that you can do outside of session to improve your sleep. You will also learn how to keep a sleep diary to track how much sleep you get each night.

HOW LONG DOES CBT FOR INSOMNIA TAKE?

CBT for Insomnia usually requires only 6 sessions.

HOW OFTEN WOULD I MEET WITH MY THERAPIST?

Sessions are usually provided on a weekly basis.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF CBT FOR INSOMNIA?

There are few risks associated with CBT for Insomnia. Initially, you may feel a temporary increase in sleepiness as you learn new skills to help you sleep better.

HOW EFFECTIVE IS CBT FOR INSOMNIA?

Many years of research have shown CBT for Insomnia to be very effective in treating insomnia, including with Veterans. As a result, it is highly recommended by experts. The majority of Veterans who receive this treatment sleep much better. And many Veterans report improvements in their mood and quality of life, in addition to improvements in sleep. Because CBT for Insomnia teaches new skills for sleeping longer and better, the benefits usually last long after the end of treatment.