

## What's Keeping You Up at Night?

### Did You Know?

Did you know that driving while sleepy can be just as dangerous as driving while drunk? That's because both alcohol and a lack of sleep hamper your ability to react quickly to a suddenly braking car, a sharp curve in the road or other situations that require a rapid response. Warning signs that you are too sleepy to drive safely include trouble keeping your eyes focused, continual yawning or being unable to recall driving the last few miles. So before hitting the road, make sure you are well rested.\*



Everyone has a "bad night" once in a while. Dogs barking, the wind howling or overeating may make it difficult to sleep. It's estimated that 35 percent of adults have occasional sleep problems, or insomnia, that make it difficult for them to fall asleep or stay asleep.

Insomnia usually isn't a problem unless it makes you feel tired during the day. Long-term insomnia, which may last months or even years, can have several causes, including advancing age, anxiety or depression, medications, chronic pain or other physical problems, or alcohol and illegal drug use or withdrawal.

### Getting Better Sleep

You can begin to prepare for a good night's sleep long before bedtime by avoiding:

- Naps during the day, especially in the evening.
- Caffeine, including coffee, tea, cola drinks, and chocolate, after 3:00 p.m.
- Tobacco products – nicotine can disrupt sleep and reduce total sleep time.

- Alcohol – it may make you sleepy but also will probably wake you up after a short time.

Many times, simple home treatment can help you get the sleep you need. If they don't help or your sleep problem worsens, talk to your doctor about other forms of treatment.

- Set a bedtime and time to get up and stick to them, even on weekends, to help your body get used to a regular sleep time.
- Wind down toward the end of the day. Don't take on problem-solving conversations or challenging activities in the evening.
- Take a warm bath before bed.
- Keep your bedroom dark, cool and quiet.
- After getting into bed, make a conscious effort to let your muscles relax. Imagine yourself in a peaceful, pleasant scene.

### Sleep Disorders

Sometimes a sleep problem is more serious than insomnia that you can treat yourself. If you think that your sleep problem may actually be a sleep disorder, talk to your doctor about appropriate treatment. Sleep disorders include:

- **Sleep apnea.** Symptoms include not breathing during sleep for at least 10 seconds.
- **Narcolepsy.** Symptoms include suddenly falling asleep while engaged in an activity; sudden, brief muscle weakness while awake; hallucinations before a sleep attack; brief loss of the ability to move when falling asleep or just waking up.
- **Parasomnias.** Symptoms include activity, such as walking, screaming, rearranging furniture or eating, while asleep.
- **Restless legs syndrome (RLS).** Symptoms include an intense feeling of discomfort, aching or twitching deep inside the legs that most often occur during sleep or when the person is falling asleep.

## Trouble Sleeping? *Try A Little Exercise*

If you're spending your nights tossing and turning, maybe the remedy is more physical activity during the day. Research indicates that regular exercise helps improve sleep in people with insomnia, which is the medical term for difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep.

Generally, it takes four to six hours after a high-intensity 20-minute aerobic workout before stress hormones decrease. However, the effect of exercise on sleep is different for each person. For example, a study of postmenopausal women showed that those who exercised in the morning had a better quality of sleep than those who exercised at night. But a study of highly

active young men found that prolonged, vigorous exercise 30 minutes before bedtime had little effect on sleep.

Because each person is different, you'll have to try experimenting with exercising at different times of the day and at different intensities to see the effect it has on your sleep and whether it can help you sleep better.

Whenever you can, try to exercise outdoors. Natural daylight has an antidepressant effect and can help promote sleep by relieving stress.

A better night's sleep – it could be just one more benefit of regular exercise!



## Around-the-Clock Health Information

Was it too much ice cream? The flu? All you know is that it's 2 a.m. and your child is saying: "My stomach hurts." At CIGNA HealthCare, we know that sometimes tummy aches can't wait until morning. That's why we offer the CIGNA HealthCare 24-Hour Health Information Line<sup>SM</sup> with nurses on call 24 hours a day, every day. They help you get answers to your questions – no matter what time your child wakes up.

Your call to the 24-Hour Health Information Line is always toll free and completely confidential. When you call, you'll have two options:

1. Speak directly with a registered nurse. A specially trained team of nurses is on duty around the clock to provide you with one-on-one help. The nurse will ask you a few questions about

your symptoms and situation, then direct you to the type of care that should make you more comfortable, including directions to the nearest medical facility or pharmacy, self-care suggestions or help getting emergency or urgent care.

2. Listen to recorded information in our audio library. You can listen to tapes on hundreds of topics ranging from injuries and illnesses to fitness and wellness. The tapes are regularly updated to include new treatments and medical data.

To access the 24-Hour Health Information Line, just call the Member Services phone number on your CIGNA HealthCare ID card or go to [www.myCIGNA.com](http://www.myCIGNA.com).

### Did You Know?

Did you know that you can listen to tapes on hundreds of health-related topics such as surgery, managing stress, aging, women's health and nutrition by calling the CIGNA HealthCare 24-Hour Health Information Line<sup>®</sup> at **1.800.CIGNA24** (244.6224)?

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