**Natural Treatments for Insomnia**

Insomnia can be a very difficult and frustrating problem, and it can have a significant impact on your health. Many people fear that prescription medications or over-the-counter sleep aids are the only methods available to manage insomnia, but there are several natural treatments that can help.

**Why Is Insomnia a Problem?**

Is it really that big a deal when you can't get to sleep? Experts say that if it's a chronic problem, then yes - it can be a big deal. For one thing, insomnia can be a symptom of a serious disorder known as sleep apnea. Left untreated, insomnia is implicated in many disorders, including:

\* Depression

\* Impaired cognitive function (particularly decision making)

\* Cardiovascular disease (high blood pressure, heart disease)

\* Stress-related disorders

\* Impaired immune function

**Are There Natural Options?**

There are, thankfully, quite a few natural methods for dealing with insomnia. Many people find relief in herbal remedies, lifestyle adjustments, and exercise. Once you've checked with your health care provider about possible medical causes for your insomnia, you might try some of these natural treatments for insomnia.

**1. Herbal Remedies**

Herbal teas and supplements are said to be a gentle and effective way of bringing on sleep. Herbs with a reputation for promoting sleep include the following:

\* **Chamomile** - This is a long-held remedy for sleeplessness that is exacerbated by nervousness and anxiety. Drinking a cup of chamomile tea in the evenings before bed may be all you need - but it can have a slight diuretic effect, so drinking a cup an hour or so before bed might work better. You may also find it beneficial to drink it throughout the day, hot or cold, or mixed with other beverages.

\* **Valerian Root** - It makes an unpleasant tea, but many people have had significant success with taking valerian root capsules. Valerian is a natural sedative.

\* **Lemon Balm** - In contrast to valerian, lemon balm tastes very good and makes a lemony tea. Like chamomile, drinking a cup in the evenings may help promote sleep. You could mix it with chamomile tea as well.

**2. Lifestyle Changes**

Insomnia can sometimes be managed by making adjustments to your lifestyle. Here are some ideas.

\* Exercise regularly. This is one of the best ways to get your body into balance and help you relax at night.

\* Cut out caffeine, even if you think you need it every day.

\* If you smoke, quit - smokers tend to have more sleep problems than non-smokers, sources report.

\* Cut back on sugar, artificial colors, preservatives, and artificial flavors. These substances have been implicated in hyperactivity and other mood and mental imbalances.