



Patient name: _____

Date: _____



Your insomnia symptoms can be relieved without medication

Insomnia is a common problem, and it is important to use non-medication strategies to treat it. In the long term, these methods are more effective and safer than medication for improving sleep in many patients.

- Studies have shown that people who take sleeping pills sleep only slightly better and longer than those who do not.
- Sleeping pills can have significant side effects, particularly in older adults.
- For example, sleeping pills can cause confusion and memory problems. They double the risk of falls and hip fractures and increase the risk of car accidents. They also make you more likely to feel tired during the day.

- Get exposure to daylight in the morning and avoid bright lights at night.
- Exercise during the day but avoid intense physical activity for a few hours before going to bed.
- Wait at least 3 to 4 hours after your last meal of the day before going to bed.
- Avoid drinking alcohol, as it can interfere with sleep.
- Avoid drinking caffeinated beverages (e.g., coffee, tea, soft drinks, energy drinks), especially in the afternoon.
- If you take a nap, keep it under 20 minutes and no later than 3 p.m.**
- Keep your bedroom dark, cool and quiet.
- Use your bed only for sleeping and sexual activity.**
- Set aside an hour to relax before going to bed and have a screen-free bedtime routine (no TV, tablet or phone).
- Take a warm 10-minute shower or bath 1 to 2 hours before going to bed.
- Go to bed only when you feel sleepy.**
- If you cannot fall asleep within 20 minutes, get out of bed and do a quiet activity such as colouring, reading or doing a crossword puzzle until you feel sleepy again.**
- Put any clocks in your bedroom out of sight, as they may make you feel stressed about the amount of time you have gone without falling asleep.
- Turn off your cell phone, put it on airplane mode or remove it from your bedroom to avoid disturbances at night.
- Always get up at the same time in the morning (even if you did not sleep well) to establish a consistent sleep routine.**
- Other: _____

 **Please return to your health care provider if:** Symptoms worsen or do not improve.

Prescriber: _____