



INSOMNIA SUPPORT

Insomnia is a common sleep difficulty that affects both adults and children. It involves ongoing problems with falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking too early and not being able to get back to sleep. It is more than the occasional bad night. It becomes a concern when it happens regularly and starts to affect daytime functioning.

NHS Definition of Insomnia

According to the NHS, insomnia is usually diagnosed when:

- You have difficulty falling asleep, staying asleep, or waking too early
- This happens at least 3 nights per week
- It has been present for at least 3 months
- It affects your daytime functioning, such as mood, concentration, or energy levels

What Might It Look Like?

In adults and children, insomnia may present as:

- Taking a long time to fall asleep (often over 30–60 minutes)
- Waking frequently in the night
- Early morning waking
- Feeling tired but unable to sleep
- Daytime irritability, low mood, or difficulty concentrating

A Key Strategy: Get Up and Reset

If you or your child are lying awake and unable to sleep, it can help to reset rather than staying in bed feeling frustrated.

- If unable to sleep, get out of bed
- Keep the environment dim, quiet, and calm
- Avoid screens or stimulating activities
- Return to bed only when sleepy
- Repeat as needed

This helps rebuild the connection between bed and sleep, rather than bed and wakefulness.



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Supporting Better Sleep

- Keep a consistent sleep and wake time, even on weekends
- Follow a calming wind-down routine before bed
- Ensure the sleep environment is dark, cool, and quiet
- Limit caffeine, nicotine, and screens in the evening
- Get regular daytime light and movement

When to Seek Further Support

Speak to a GP or healthcare professional if sleep difficulties are ongoing, especially if you notice:

- Snoring, gasping, or pauses in breathing (possible sleep apnoea)
- Uncomfortable or restless legs at night (possible restless legs syndrome)
- Persistent insomnia despite making changes
- Significant daytime tiredness or impact on daily life

