
Insomnia

A Clinical Guide to Assessment
and Treatment

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and Treatment

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*To our children, Geneviève and Sébastien (CM) and Craig,
Carolyn, and Robbie (CE), for their love and inspiration,
and to Rena whose courage in adversity is
an example to follow (CE)*

Preface

Along with increasing recognition of the consequences and costs of insomnia, there is growing evidence documenting the effectiveness of cognitive-behavior therapy for insomnia. Yet, there is still a major gap between available evidence and current clinical practice. Much of this gap is due to economics, limited treatment access, and ineffective dissemination of knowledge. There is a definite need for practical materials to facilitate access to and implementation of interventions for insomnia. As scientists-practitioners, we are constantly reminded of this need by frequent requests from clinicians around the world for questionnaires and handouts to assist them in treating insomnia patients. It was during a recent international sleep meeting, more specifically on a train journey between Dresden and Prague, that we drafted an outline of a handbook that would help fill this gap.

This clinical handbook describes an evidence-based treatment program for insomnia. Its content is based on materials that have been clinically tested and validated with patients in various settings and with different subtypes of insomnia. The manual is divided into eight chapters. Chapter 1 presents an introduction to sleep and provides answers to frequently asked questions about the nature of sleep, its determinants, and about the consequences of sleep loss and insomnia. Chapters 2 and 3 outline the main clinical features of insomnia and differential diagnostic issues and describe a practical approach to the assessment of insomnia complaint. Chapters 4–6 provide a step-by-step description of the treatment program, including sleep hygiene guidelines, relaxation therapy, behavioral and sleep scheduling strategies, and cognitive interventions. Chapter 7 covers the essentials of sleep medications, their indications, risks and benefits, as well as clinical guidelines to discontinue their usage among prolonged

users. Chapter 8 concludes with practical strategies for effective treatment implementation and addresses clinical issues arising when working with older adults and with patients who have concurrent health and mental health problems.

This treatment manual is intended for health-care practitioners (psychologists, physicians, and nurses) and trainees who wish to develop competence in the assessment and treatment of insomnia. The goal is to reach health-care providers with a program that can be administered effectively in various clinical settings (e.g., outpatient clinics, primary care, and sleep disorders clinics). Special features were incorporated to make this book user-friendly and to ensure that it is utilized successfully as a therapy manual even by non-specialists. For example, clinical vignettes and summary boxes are inserted throughout to illustrate important conceptual and therapy features. In addition, key materials such as assessment scales, outlines of therapy sessions, and patient handouts and worksheets are available in the Appendixes and on an accompanying disk so they can be reproduced as needed.

We are very grateful to several individuals and organizations for their assistance in preparing this handbook. First, we are thankful to the numerous students, fellows, and trainees who have contributed to the development and validation of the materials presented in this book; their questions and ideas are always a source of challenge and stimulation for moving our field forward. We are also grateful to several funding organizations, including the Canadian Institute for Health Research, the Chief Scientist Office of the Scottish Executive Health Department, and the National Institute of Mental Health, for their financial support of our research programs over the last several years.

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COLIN A. ESPIE

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