

Cannabinoids and Health

Module 7

Lecture 5: Etiology and Current Treatments for Sleep
Disorders

Common Risk Factors

- Risk Factors for Insomnia:

- Being female
- Being over the age of 60
- Having depression or anxiety
- Frequently traveling long distances
- Working night shifts
- Have a family history of insomnia

- Risk Factors for Sleep Apnea

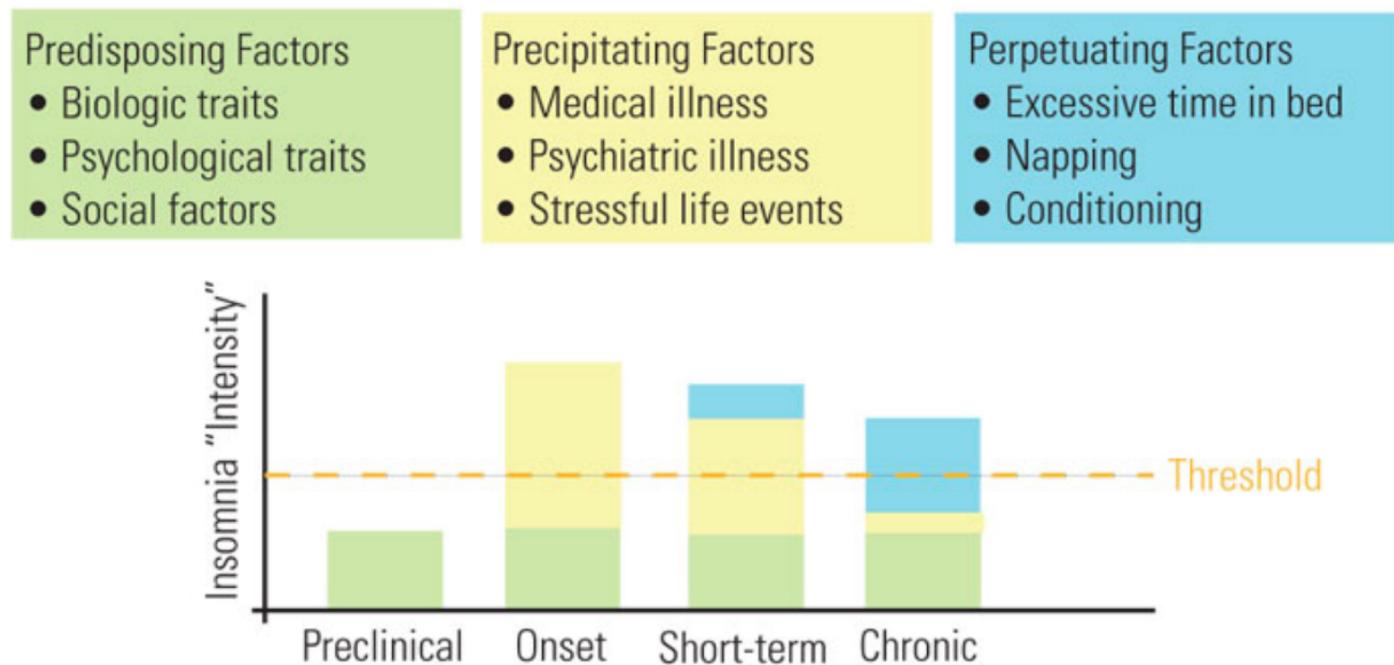
- Being male
- Being over the age of 40
- Being overweight
- Having a family history of sleep apnea
- Having a neck size of 17 inches or greater
- Having chronic sinus problems or a deviated septum



Etiology of Insomnia

FIGURE

A MODEL OF CHRONIC INSOMNIA²⁻⁴



Erman MK. *Primary Psychiatry*. Vol 14, No 7. 2007.

Insomnia Treatment Options – Lifestyle Changes

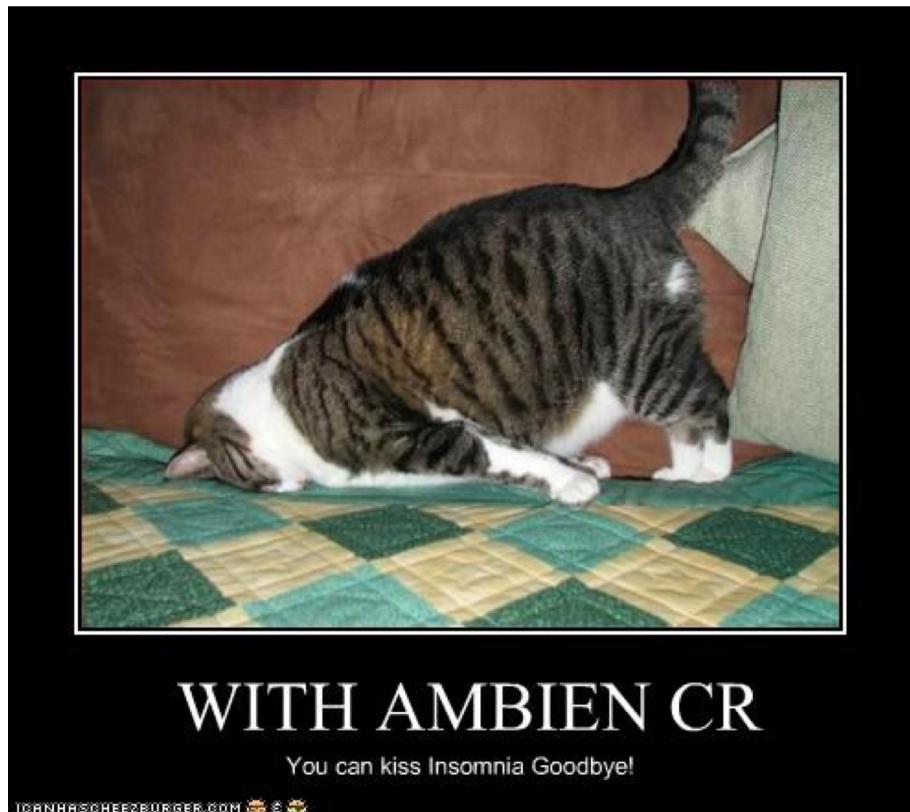
- Avoid drugs that make it difficult to sleep (caffeine, tobacco, alcohol)
- Adopt habits that make it easier to fall asleep and stay asleep (e.g., wind down routine, books, music, hot bath)
- Exercise regularly but not 5 to 6 hours before going to bed
- No heavy meals before bed
- Avoid bright lighting and limit possible distractions in bedroom (TV, laptop/tablet/phone) – make sure bedroom is dark/quiet
- Go to sleep around the same time each night and wake up around the same time each morning, even on weekends

Insomnia Treatment Options – Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

- CBT targets the thoughts and actions that can disrupt sleep
- Relaxation techniques are used to reduce anxiety and helps mind to settle down and stop racing
- CBT replaces sleep anxiety with more positive thinking
- CBT works as well as prescription medicine for many people who have chronic insomnia and may provide better long-term relief than medicine alone
- No side effects but involves seeing therapist weekly for 2 to 3 months.

Insomnia Treatment Options – Medications

- Benzodiazepines (e.g., Halcion)
- Non-benzodiazepines (e.g., Ambien)
 - Side effects include day time drowsiness, drugged feeling, “weird stuff”
- Over the counter melatonin
 - Side effects include headache, dizziness, drowsiness



WITH AMBIEN CR

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Treatment Options

- Treatments for Sleep Apnea
 - CPAP machine
 - Continuous air pressure keeps airway from collapsing
 - No serious side effects but can be uncomfortable to use and adjustment can take time
- Treatments for Circadian Rhythm Disorders
 - Melatonin
 - Behavioral therapy (sleep hygiene)
 - Light therapy



Treatment Challenges

- Effectiveness of most treatments is modest at best
- Most treatments only treat “symptoms” rather than root cause of the sleep problem
- Medication treatments often have serious side effects (burning/tingling, dizziness, daytime drowsiness)
- In general, etiology of sleep disorders is not well understood; makes it difficult to develop new, effective treatment options

Conclusions

- Treatments include behavioral approaches as well as medications
- Cognitive behavioral approaches have few side effects but are not effective for everyone and require 2-3 month commitment
- Medications can have negative side effects
- New treatments are desperately needed