

# SLEEP AND ADHD

YOUTUBE presentation by ADHD specialist

Often what can be controlled during the daytime with medication is uncontrolled at bedtime. Age of onset on average is 12 ½ yrs old. 15% of kids with ADHD have sleep troubles which is twice the rate found in children/teens without ADHD. By age 12/13, more than 50% of people with ADHD will have serious sleep issues. By age 30, more than 70 of ADHD people report spending more than an hour trying to fall sleep.

4 main sleep issues:

- 1.) **Initiation insomnia**-the brain will not shut off. Many report getting a burst of energy at about the same time when others are getting sleepy. This problem results in what is known as “perverse sleep”-the desire to awake when you’re asleep, and the desire to be asleep when your awake.
- 2.) **Restless sleep**- is light, fitful sleep, which can be brought on by initiation insomnia. Tossing and turning results in waking up not feeling adequately rested.
- 3.) **Difficulty waking**-this stems from restless sleep. After tossing and turning until about 4am, the person will fall into an extremely deep sleep, so deep that morning alarms cannot wake the person up. When the person finally wakes up, he will feel sluggish and lethargic for the rest of the day until about the evening, when “initiation insomnia” starts again.
- 4.) **Intrusive sleep**-a condition in which the ADHD person who are awake will suddenly find themselves extremely drowsy and sometimes immediately fall asleep. This is most like to happen when the person is disengaged from an activity. This sudden shift from paying attention to extreme boredom is like the non ADHD person who has experienced highway hypnosis.

## Helpful hints

- **Avoid caffeine after 5pm.**
- **Avoid video games 2 hours before bed since they excite and arouse; not calming and sedative-** if you have initiation insomnia, then video games will exacerbate the problem.
- **Avoid strenuous or demanding activity a few hours before bedtime.**
- **Have good bedtime habits**-have a consistent bedtime.

## Additional problems

**Circadian rhythm disorder**-the person can sleep well but not at a typical time of day. Many sleep well from 4am to 11am but not from 10pm to 6am, for example. A consistent bedtime can improve the odds of a proper circadian rhythm.