

A Case Study of Stress-Related Insomnia & Homoeopathy

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ABSTRACT-

Stress-related insomnia is a prevalent condition characterized by difficulty in initiating or maintaining sleep due to psychological stressors. This insomnia can lead to significant impairment in daily functioning and overall well-being. Homeopathy, a system of medicine based on the principle of treating "like to be treated with like," offers a holistic approach to managing this condition. This paper explores the efficacy of homeopathic remedies in alleviating symptoms of stress-related insomnia, emphasizing individualized treatment plans that consider the unique physical and emotional profiles of patients. A review of clinical studies and case reports indicates that homeopathic treatments may effectively reduce anxiety, promote relaxation, and improve sleep quality. Furthermore, the gentle nature of homeopathic remedies presents a compelling alternative to conventional pharmacological interventions, particularly for those seeking a more natural and personalized approach to managing stress and insomnia. The findings suggest that homeopathy could play a valuable role in the integrative management of stress-related insomnia, warranting further research into its mechanisms and long-term benefits.

Key words- Stress, Insomnia, Disturbance of Sleep, Difficulty to maintaining sleep, Insomnia Severity Index, Nux Vomica,

INTRODUCTION-

Stress-related insomnia has become increasingly prevalent in today's fast-paced and demanding world. As individuals face numerous challenges—such as work pressures, personal relationships, financial concerns, and health issues—many find it difficult to achieve restful sleep. This condition is characterized not only by trouble falling asleep or staying asleep but also by the quality of sleep, which can be severely impacted by stress and anxiety.

The relationship between stress and insomnia is complex; while stress can lead to sleep disturbances, poor sleep can further exacerbate stress, creating a vicious cycle. This interplay significantly affects overall health, contributing to a range of physical and mental health issues, including fatigue, depression, and impaired cognitive function.

Understanding the mechanisms of stress-related insomnia is crucial for developing effective interventions. Various treatment options exist, ranging from behavioral therapies and lifestyle modifications to pharmacological approaches. Among these, homeopathy has emerged as a potential alternative, focusing on individualized treatment that addresses both the symptoms and the underlying causes of stress^{1,2}.

DEFINITION-

Stress-related insomnia is a type of insomnia that occurs when high levels of stress and anxiety prevent an individual from getting adequate sleep. This can lead to difficulties in falling asleep, staying asleep or experiencing poor quality sleep. Stress can cause physiological arousal, making it challenging to relax and fall asleep.³

CAUSES-

Stress-related insomnia can arise from various factors that disrupt the sleep cycle and lead to difficulty falling or staying asleep. Some common causes are-

1. Psychological Stress-

- a) Work Pressure- Deadlines, heavy workloads, or conflicts at work can lead to anxiety.
- b) Personal Issues- Relationship problems, family responsibilities, or financial concerns can create mental strain.
- c) Anxiety and Worry- Constant worrying about everyday life, future events, or past experiences can keep the mind active, making it hard to relax.
- d) Racing Thoughts - A tendency to overthink or ruminate can prevent the mind from winding down.

e) Emotional Distress- Feelings of sadness, anger, or frustration can contribute to sleep difficulties^{1,3}.

2. Hormonal Factors-

a) **Increase cortisol levels-** cortisol a stress hormone, in stress condition body produce more cortisol that interfere with sleep.

b) **Adrenaline-** adrenaline is another hormone that is released in response to stress. It can cause physical symptom like racing heart and trembling, making it difficult to fall asleep.

c) **Insulin** – Insulin, it help to maintain blood sugar levels. In stress condition body produce more insulin, leading to energy crash that can disrupt sleep.

d) **Melatonin-** Melatonin is a hormone that regulates sleep –wake cycles. In stress condition body cannot produce sufficient melatonin results it makes difficult fall asleep.

e) **Estrogen and Progesterone-** estrogen & progesterone are hormone that regulate the menstrual cycle and pregnancy. Changes in these hormone levels can affect sleep patterns and contribute to insomnia.⁴

3. Physical Stressors-

a) **Illness or Pain:** Chronic pain or medical conditions can make it difficult to find a comfortable sleeping position.

b) **Lifestyle Factors:** Poor diet, lack of exercise, or excessive caffeine and alcohol consumption can impact sleep quality.

4. Environmental Factors- Noise, light, or an uncomfortable sleeping environment can exacerbate stress and insomnia.

5. Changes in Routine- Significant life changes (like moving, job changes, or having a child) can disrupt normal sleep patterns.

6. Mental Health Condition- Conditions such as anxiety disorders, depression, or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can lead to sleep disturbances.

7. Overstimulation- Engaging with technology or stimulating activities close to bedtime can keep the brain active when it should be winding down.

8. Caffeine and Stimulants- Consuming caffeine or other stimulants, especially in the afternoon or evening, can interfere with the ability to fall asleep^{1,3}.

Risk Factor for Stress-Related Insomnia-There is certain factor that increases the risk for developing stress- related insomnia.

1. Chronic stress- ongoing stress can lead to insomnia.

2. Anxiety disorder- anxiety disorders, such as generalized anxiety disorder or post- traumatic stress disorder, can increase risk of developing insomnia.

3. Depression- Depression can increase risk of developing insomnia.

4. Trauma- Traumatic event can also increase the risk of developing insomnia.⁵

Clinical Features- The symptom of stress related insomnia can be different from person to person but some are common-

1. Difficult falling asleep or staying asleep

2. Walking up too early or having trouble falling back asleep

3. Feeling tired, groggy, or lacking energy during the day

4. Difficulty concentrating or paying attention

5. Increase irritability, anxiety, or depression

6. Physical symptom like headache, muscle tension, or stomach problems¹

Consequences of stress related insomnia- If leave it untreated, stress-related insomnia can have significant consequences on an individual's quality of life, including

1. Impaired cognitive function and memory

2. Increase risk of chronic disease like diabetes, hypertension, and other cardiovascular diseases

3. Weakened immune system

4. Mood disorder like depression and anxiety

5. Strained relationships and decreased productivity⁵

DIAGNOSIS- Diagnosis of stress related insomnia typically involves a comprehensive evaluation of person's sleep patterns, medical history and psychological factors. The diagnostic process may consist of multiple exams and appointments to rule out underlying medical conditions that could be contributing to insomnia. A health care professional may perform a physical exam to check for signs of medical problems that may be related to insomnia. They may also ask questions about sleep habits, including the time it takes to fall asleep, the number of awakenings during the night and the time spent awake during the night.

Diagnostic Tools-

1. Sleep Diary

2. Sleep study-A sleep study, also known as a polysomnogram, is a test that records brain waves, muscle activity, and other functions while a person sleeps. It can help diagnose sleep disorders such as sleep apnea or restless leg syndrome.
3. Questionnaires- Insomnia Severity Index (ISI),⁶

General Management-

1. Cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia CBT-I
2. Relaxation techniques like deep breathing, mindfulness meditation, progressive muscle relaxation
3. Establishing consistent sleep schedule and creating a sleep conducive environment
4. Avoid stimulating activity before bedtime and limiting exposure to screens
5. Engaging in regular physical activity and practicing stress reducing activity like yoga
6. Expressive writing to process emotions and clear the mind^{7,8}

Homoeopathic Management-

Homeopathic medicine offers several remedies that may help with stress-related insomnia. Mentions in the books Homoeopathic Materia medica, Homoeopathic Repertory, and Homoeopathic Therapeutic

1. **Coffea Cruda**: Often recommended for individuals who have difficulty sleeping due to an overactive mind or excessive excitement, impossible to close the eyes. Due to prolonged watching or abuse of drugs, after overwork which brings joy
2. **Ambra Grisea**: Sleeplessness arising from worries of mind as from business trouble. The patient goes to bed with a tolerably high level of fatigue, yet he wakes up the moment his head strikes the pillow.
3. **Nux Vomica**: Suitable for those experiencing insomnia due to stress, anxiety, or overindulgence, particularly in stimulating substances like caffeine. Cannot sleep after 3 am until towards morning
4. **Passiflora Incarnata**: Known for its calming effects, it can help alleviate anxiety and promote restful sleep. Restless and wakeful, resulting from exhaustion, mentally worried and overworked.
5. **Gelsmium**: For insomnia of brain workers. Useful for men who pass restless nights, awaken early in the morning and worry over their business affair.
6. **Chamomilla**: Effective for those who are irritable and restless, especially when stressed. Pain disturbs the sleep. Sleepless after abuse of narcotic. Sleep with thigh separates.
7. **Zincum Metallicum**: May help if insomnia is accompanied by restlessness and fidgeting. Broken un-refreshing. Scream aloud when unconscious while you sleep. Jerks and starts on falling to sleep. Somnambulism after suppressed emotion.
8. **Kali Phos**: Head remedy for sleeplessness, especially during the latter part of the night. The Patient is a nervous wreck due to business worries and excessive mental exertion.
9. **Aconite**: Often used for sudden onset of insomnia due to acute anxiety or panic.
10. **Piscidia Erythrina**- Insomnia due to worriness.

Case Study-

Patient Information-

Mr. Ram (Change name) 45 years age comes to my clinic with the complaints of sleeplessness last from two months. He said that, he cannot sleep properly due to multiple thoughts in mind this chain of thought creates pressure that is why, it is difficult for me to go for sleep, when I was lying in the bed my mind is actively working and not finding the conclusion of this type of thinking.

He reports to me all these complaints start from two months back when my office boss changed and a new boss came in my office. He is very dominating in nature, wants everything but does nothing. He plays blaming games daily, he gives warning unnecessarily. He creates a mental pressure in my mind. All these types of activity create a stress in my mind, I feel very tired, I am not concentrate to any my work. It impaired my sleep habits. Frequent waking during the night especially 3am after that time I am not sleep, waking up feeling un-refreshed, increased stress due to work. I cannot tolerate any kind of noise I just want to noise free atmosphere.

Clinical Finding-

He is oversensitive to noise, he feels anxiety due to sleeplessness, feels stress due to office work and their atmosphere. Active mind causes sleeplessness, cannot handle stress

Diet and food habits- Non-vegetarian, Addiction – Tobacco smoking and alcohol, Hobbies- Not specific, Marital history- Married, History of regular treatment (Along with duration) – No

Mental General-

Anxious due to sleeplessness, mentally active causes sleeplessness, cannot handle stress, oversensitive to noise, stress of work. Stress mentally and emotionally.

Physical General-

Appearance- Average and tired looking , Thirst- normal, Food Desire- No-vegetarian , Addiction- Tobacco Smoking and Alcohol drinking Appetite- decrease due to sometime indigestion, Urine- normal, Stool – unsatisfactory , constipation, Sleep- sleeplessness, disturbed cannot sleep after 3am, un-refreshing

Physical examination-

Height – 5.9 feet, Weight- 75kg, BMI- 23.2, Blood pressure- 130/80 mm of Hg, Pulse- 80 bpm, Temperature- 98.4c

Diagnosis- Stress related Insomnia

Totality of symptom-

1. Mind activity with sleeplessness
2. Mind anxiety with sleeplessness
3. Mind excitement, ailment from mental and emotional consequence
4. Mind cannot handle anymore things overwhelmed by stress
5. Mind oversensitive to noise
6. Mind stress mentally and emotionally
7. Rectum constipation, unsatisfactory
8. Sleep – sleeplessness after 3am
9. Sleep un-refreshing in morning
10. Generalities – food and drink desire for alcohol
11. Generalities- desire tobacco smoking

Reportorial analysis – (by Complete Dynamic Practitioner edition software based on complete repertory)

Complete Repertory 2018r1 © 2018 Roger van Zandvoort

Analysis March 13, 2023

Analysis uses 11 rubrics.

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	nux-v	sep	coff	calc	lyc	op	nat-c	nat-m	phos	lach	cocc	ars	kali-c	staph	bry	thus-t	sulph	bell	carb	chin	zinc	sil	merc	hep	mag-c	graph	asar	acon	mag-m	hyr
	10066	62	53	47	44	42	41	40	40	39	39	36	34	33	32	32	32	31	31	30	30	29	27	23	22	22	22	21	21	
	10	8	7	9	8	7	7	8	7	8	6	7	6	7	6	6	5	7	6	8	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	
9 Mind; Activity; sleeplessness, with			4												1					1										
88 Mind; Anxiety; sleeplessness, with	3	4	3	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	4	4	1	1	3	4	1	4	1	4	1	2	4	3	2	3		4	1	4
676 Mind; Excitement, excitable; ailments from, agg.; mental and emotional consequences of	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	4	3	4
137 Mind; Handle things anymore, cannot, overwhelmed by stress	1	2		4	2	1		1	1	1	1	3		3			1		3		1				1		3		3	1
72 Mind; Sensitive, oversensitive; noise, sounds, to, agg.; slightest	4	3	4	3	3	4	3	1	3	1	3	1	3					4		1	1	4	1				4	1		
64 Mind; Stressed mentally and emotionally	3													1					3											
162 Rectum; Constipation; insufficient, incomplete, unsatisfactory stools	4	4		1	3	4	4	4	1	3		1	4	3	3	3	4	1	2	3	3	4		3		1			3	1
24 Sleep; Sleeplessness; midnight; after; two am. or three am.; after	3	3	3	1			1	1					3		1					1					1					
78 Sleep; Unrefreshing; morning	4	3	3	3	3	3		3	2	1	3	1	2		3	2	4				1		3	3	4	2			3	
227 Generalities; Food and drinks; alcohol, alcoholic drinks; desires	4	3		3	3	4	3	3	4	4	3	4		3	3	3	4	3	3	3	3	1	3	4		3	4	4		1
60 Generalities; Tobacco; desires; smoking	3		1	1	1		2		1				3						1											

Followup and out comes-

First Prescription-(13/03/2023)

1. Nux Vomica-30 – 6 pills four time in a day
 2. Piscidia-Q 20- drops with half cup of water at night before 30 min going to sleep.
- Report after 7 days.

Advice -Lifestyle Recommendations,

1. Establish a calming bedtime routine.
2. Incorporate relaxation techniques like deep breathing or meditation.
3. Avoid stimulants like caffeine, alcohol, smoking tobacco.

Follow up- (21/03/2023) Patient feels better but not much

Second Prescription-

1. Nux Vomica-30 – 6 pills four time in a day.
2. Piscidia-Q 20- drops with half cup of water at night before 30 min going to sleep.

Report after 15 days.

Follow up-(06/04/2023) Patient reports regarding improvement, Anxiety levels have decreased, and he is managing work stress, sleep quality improve, feels refresh in morning, overall feel much better

Third Prescription-

1. Nux Vomica-30 – 6 pills twice in a day.
2. Piscidia-Q 20- drops with half cup of water at night before 30 min going to sleep.

Report after 20 days.

Insomnia Severity Index- Before and After Treatment

S.No	Insomnia Problem	Score treatment	
		Before	After
1.	Difficulty falling a sleep	4	0
2.	Difficulty staying a sleep	2	1
3.	Problem walking up too early	4	0
4.	How Satisfied/Dissatisfied are you with Current sleep pattern?	4	1
5.	How Noticeable to other do you think your sleep problem is in terms of impairing the quality of your life?	3	1
6.	How Worried/Distressed are you about your current sleep problem?	4	1
7.	To what extent do you consider your sleep problem to Interfere with your daily function (e.g. daytime fatigue, mood, ability to function at work/daily chores, concentration, memory, mood etc?) Currently?	3	1
Total		24	5

Total score categories :-

1. 0-7- No clinically significant insomnia
2. 8-14- Sub-threshold insomnia
3. 15-21- Clinically insomnia (moderate severity)
4. 22-28-Clinically insomnia (severe)

CONCLUSION-

In conclusion, treating stress-related insomnia with homeopathic medicine can be an effective approach for many individuals. Homeopathy focuses on the whole person and its treatment depends on the individual's unique symptoms and experiences, which may help address the underlying causes of insomnia. Remedy in this case Nux Vomica and Piscidia are used to alleviate symptoms associated with stress and improve sleep quality.

Clinical evidence suggests that homeopathic treatments can reduce anxiety and promote relaxation, leading to better sleep patterns. Additionally, while many may find relief through homeopathy, it is important to consider a holistic approach that includes lifestyle changes, stress management techniques, and, if necessary, conventional medical advice to ensure comprehensive care for insomnia.

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