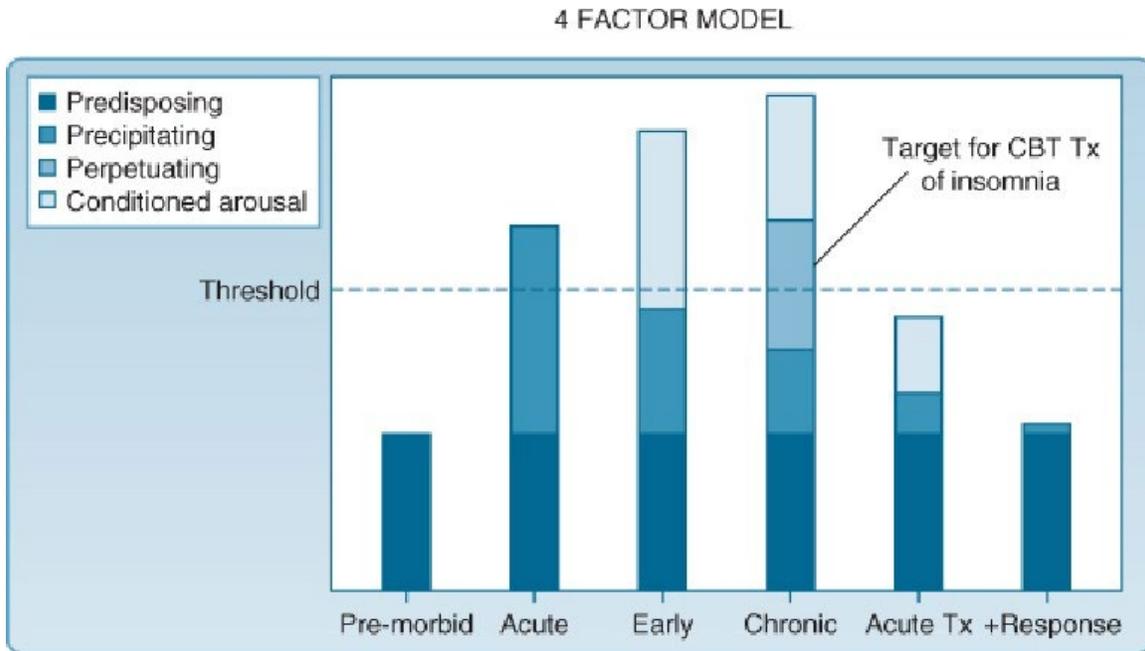


An Introduction to Cognitive-Behavioral Treatment of Insomnia

How Chronic Insomnia Develops: The 4-Factor Model

Cognitive-behavioral treatment (CBT) is based largely on the 4-factor conceptual model for chronic insomnia. According to the 4-factor model below, predisposing factors, precipitating events, perpetuating mechanisms and conditioned arousal all contribute to the development of chronic sleep problems.



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According to this model some individuals may be particularly predisposed or vulnerable to sleep difficulties by virtue of having a “weak”, highly sensitive, or dysfunctional biological sleep system. When such individuals are confronted with a stressful life event, they tend to develop an acute sleep disturbance. This sleep problem, in turn, may then be maintained if the person develops poor sleep habits (e.g. varying sleep-wake schedule, daytime napping, spending excessive time in bed, etc.) in an effort to cope with the sleep difficulty. In addition, when these strategies fail to improve the sleep problem, the person may begin worry about their sleep difficulty, wondering if it will ever end and what consequences this may have on their life. This worry and stress related to sleep can make insomnia even worse, leading to a self-perpetuating cycle of stress and insomnia. Thus, although biological vulnerabilities and the initial stressor are important contributing factors to insomnia, poor sleep habits and conditioned arousal are viewed as critical sustaining elements in the sleep disturbance. As a result, our cognitive-behavioral approach is, in part, designed to correct those sleep habits and conditioned arousal that maintain or add to your sleep problems. Generally speaking this treatment will require

you to come back to our office several times over the next several weeks. Typically, treatment will require you to attend 4-5 weekly sessions that will last approximately 30 minutes each. During these sessions we will introduce you to several scientifically proven and extensively researched techniques to improve your sleep. These techniques include sleep restriction or consolidation therapy, stimulus control therapy, sleep-specific cognitive therapy and relaxation training.

Efficacy of CBT:

This treatment will require you to make a variety of changes in your sleep habits. Changing well entrenched habits can be very difficult. We want to ensure you know that this process will require a great deal of effort and patience on your part. Although we are here to assist you through this process, success is largely up to your and your commitment to the program. We cannot guarantee that you will be successful, however you may increase your chances of success through following all treatment recommendation and becoming fully involved in the process. What this means is that we believe that in order to be successful, it is our job to provide you with all the skills and information you need to overcome your insomnia. This requires you to become your own sleep expert and fully understand the factors that contribute to your sleep problem.

As stated earlier, we cannot guarantee that this treatment will be successful for your particular sleep difficulty. However, we can tell you that research studies conducted on people with similar sleep problems to the one you are experiencing have found CBT to be highly effective. These studies suggest that 70-80% of persons successfully completing this type of program are able to gain significant improvements in their sleep. In addition, treatment programs such as this have been demonstrated to be more effective than commonly prescribed sleep medications.

Treatment Purpose:

The purpose of this treatment is to provide you many strategies for improving your sleep and assist you in becoming your own sleep expert. This treatment aims to correct those beliefs and sleep habits that are likely maintaining your insomnia. As such, we must let you know that if you are vulnerable to insomnia, chances are it may come back in the future. Therefore, it is important to keep notes and hold onto all materials you are provided through this treatment process. We encourage you to keep an insomnia file where you keep all handouts and insights gained through this treatment process. If and when you experience insomnia in the future, you can refer back to these materials and recognize what you need to do to ensure your insomnia does not again take control of your life.

Introduction to the Sleep Log:

To start this process, we want to introduce you to an important tool that will be used throughout this treatment process, the daily sleep log. The sleep log serves several purposes. The first purpose is that it will provide us with all the information we need to assist you in resetting your sleep schedule over the next several sessions. In addition, we want to know how you are doing through treatment. The sleep log will also serve to allow us to monitor your progress through the program. Lastly, the sleep log will allow you to begin to recognize various things you might be doing that interferes with good quality sleep. As you fill out your sleep logs, think back to what you did that day and how that may have led to a good or poor night's sleep.

Sleep Log Instructions:

Keeping a sleep log does not mean we want you to become a nighttime “clock watcher.” This is the last thing we want! Clock watching can increase stress related to sleep and interfere with good quality sleep. Therefore, we would like you to turn your clock around and ignore that it is even there. Simply keep your sleep log on your bedside table and when you first get into bed write down that time. Then leave the log alone until you get out of bed the next day. Remember that we are interested in knowing when you got into bed and when you got out of bed and not when you actually went to sleep and woke up. After you get out of bed the next day, we want you to simply “guesstimate” all of the rest of the questions on the diary. Think back to the previous night and give us your best guess as to how long it took you to get to sleep, how many times you woke up, etc. Do a calculation in your head based on your best guess to determine how much sleep you actually believe you got on this night.