

## Case Study James Paxton (25)

James Paxton, aged 25, is an operations executive who has suffered problems sleeping for the last 3 years.

I suffered from problems sleeping on and off for the last 3 years. I have trouble falling asleep and have to have complete silence and often end up lying awake for hours with my mind racing. I rarely get a full night's sleep as I wake up around three times every night and have trouble getting back to sleep too, sometimes I get up and watch TV until about 5am when I finally feel like I can sleep again.

My job is stressful and accuracy is important and feeling tired made it an uphill struggle. I got into a vicious cycle of feeling stressed because I was tired and then not being able to sleep which made me feel even more tired and anxious!

My girlfriend hates that I can't sleep as I drive her mad with my constant midnight roaming, so when a friend told her about NiteHerb she suggested I give it a go. I have tried various remedies over the years, like lavender oil on my pillow, with no obvious success, and I was not going to go as far as sedatives, so this sounded like the perfect solution.

I have been taking NiteHerb for a couple of weeks now and my sleep is steadily improving, I sometimes still wake up in the night but I have found that getting to sleep is a lot easier. Now the majority of the time I sleep well, with less bad nights than I used to have before I took NiteHerb. I now feel more alive in the day and can concentrate better at work after a good night's sleep.

*This is James' personal experience; the benefits of this product have not been scientifically proven.*

### Niteherb: Traditionally used to Help you Sleep ...Naturally

**NiteHerb is a traditional herbal medicinal product used for the temporary relief of sleep disturbances due to symptoms of mild anxiety, exclusively based on long-standing use as a traditional remedy.**

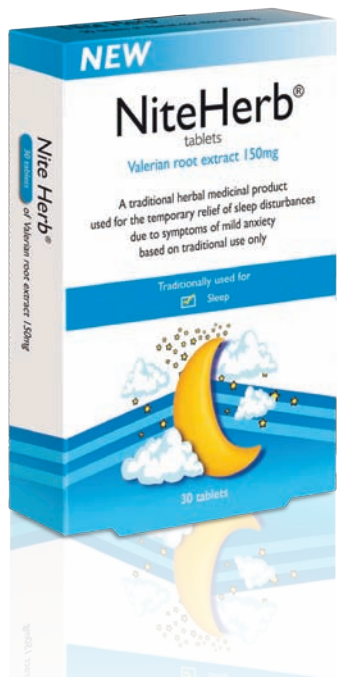
Available from leading pharmacies and health food stores.

Price: £5.99 for 30 tablets.

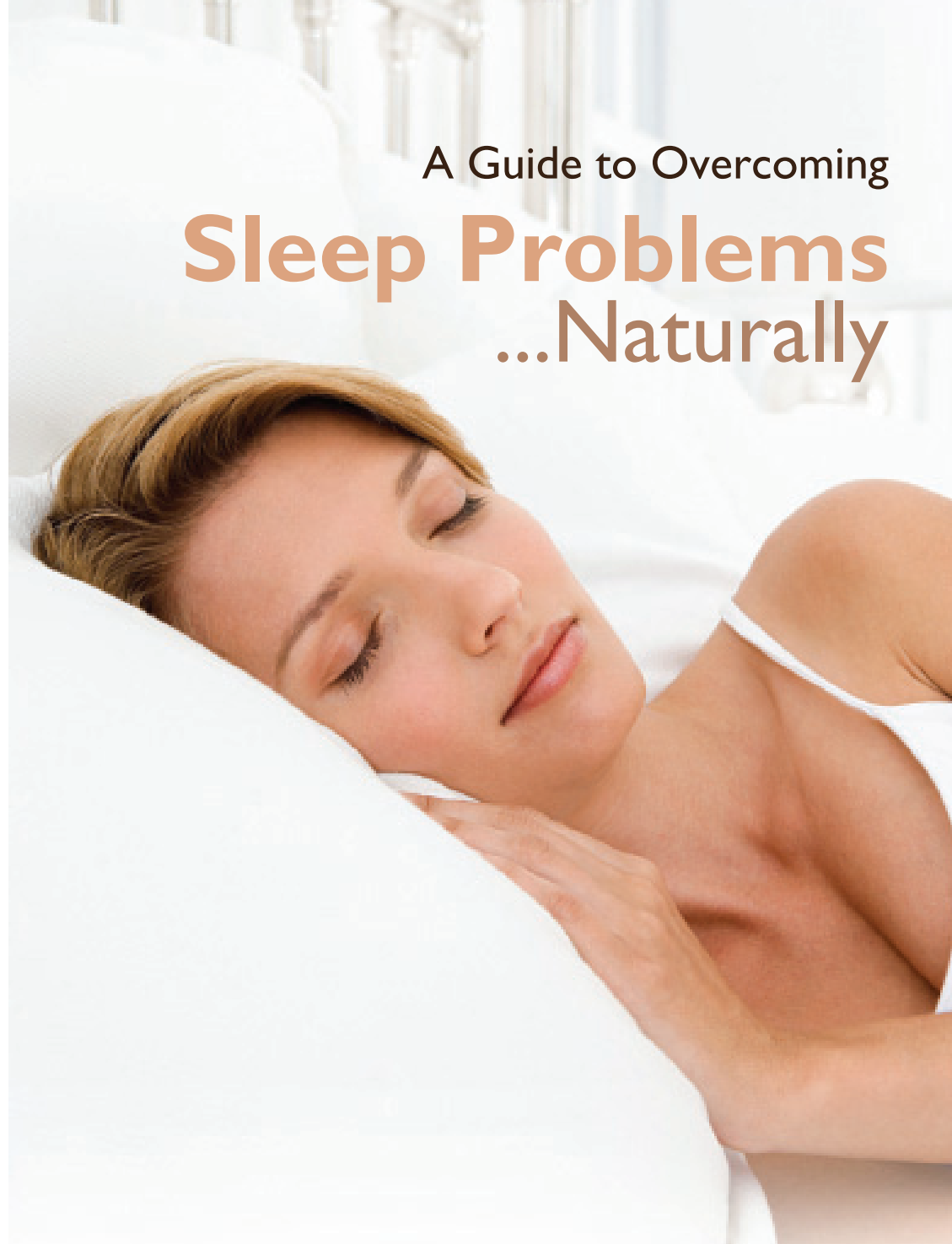
Take 1 to 2 tablets, half an hour before bedtime. If necessary, an additional tablet can be taken earlier in the evening.

As the effects of this product may not occur immediately, the tablets should be taken for 2 to 4 weeks.

Always read the label.



# A Guide to Overcoming Sleep Problems ...Naturally



For more information telephone: **01628 401980**  
or visit **www.niteherb.co.uk**

**Q&A** - Including a question and answer section with award-winning health writer and GP, **Dr Sarah Brewer**

# Difficulty Sleeping is Common

Just about everyone experiences sleep problems at some time during their life – often when they're feeling worried or stressed. It may last just a few days (eg jetlag) or a few weeks (eg exam stress) but when it is due to anxiety, sleep difficulties can last for several weeks.

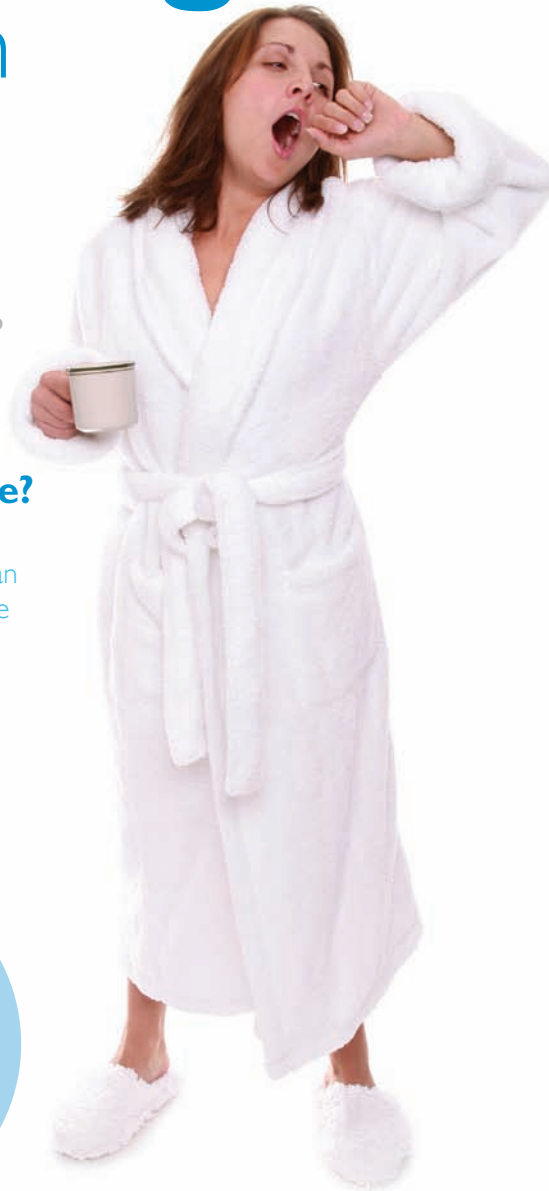
## What is sleep disturbance?

Sleep disturbance is the perception of difficulty falling asleep, or in maintaining an adequate amount of sleep. You may wake up earlier than you would like, and the sleep you do achieve is not refreshing.

Surveys suggest as many as one in three people is affected.

### Did you know?

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People aged 60 and over tend to sleep 1.5 hours less per 24 hour period than younger adults aged 30 and below.



# Why You Need Restorative Sleep...

Sleep is so essential for your physical and mental well-being that you spend around a third of your life in bed!

## While you are asleep:

- ✓ Your brain processes information, memory and experiences
- ✓ Your muscles and joints recover from constant use during the day
- ✓ You produce increased amounts of growth hormone
- ✓ Protein in all parts of your body is replenished faster than when you are awake
- ✓ Your production of skin cells, red blood cells and immune cells increases

## Why lack of sleep is an important problem

Lack of sleep has a significant effect on your quality of life. When you suffer from sleep disturbance, you wake up feeling tired and irritable, and may not feel that you are performing at your best.

Achieving just the right amount of sleep seems to be important for long-term good health and well-being.

### Did you know?

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Sleep is a form of unconsciousness in which some parts of the brain switch off, but others become more active.





# Time to Press the Snooze Button...

## 20 TOP Sleeping Tips

Sleep difficulties are often associated with anxiety and, in turn, lack of sleep makes anxiety worse. This chicken-and-egg scenario means it's often difficult to know which problem came first. Luckily, taking steps to reduce anxiety can help your sleep quality improve – and vice versa.

- 1 Try to avoid day-time naps, which reduce your need for sleep at night.
- 2 Steer clear of substances that interfere with sleep such as caffeine, nicotine and alcohol. Although alcohol may help you fall asleep initially, you are likely to have a disturbed sleep once the drugged effect has worn off.
- 3 Take regular exercise, but avoid strenuous activity late in the evening.
- 4 Eat a light meal in the early evening; otherwise hunger - a primitive alerting response - can stop you sleeping.
- 5 Try not to eat after 7 pm, and avoid rich, heavy evening meals that take a lot of digesting.
- 6 Invest in a BIG bed so you and your partner have lots of room to move around without disturbing each other (it also provides cooler spaces to move into when necessary).
- 7 Ensure your mattress is not too hard and not too soft. Temperature-sensitive viscose-elastic mattresses, which mould to your shape and support your joints, reduce night-time tossing and turning as much as five-fold.
- 8 Keep a window slightly open in your bedroom at night to allow oxygen to circulate (fit a safety catch if necessary to deter burglars).
- 9 Learn to associate the bedroom with sleep and intimacy – try not to use it for study, eating, working or watching TV.
- 10 Take time to unwind from the stresses of the day before going to bed - read a book, listen to soothing music or have a candle lit bath.

- 11 Try to maintain a regular night routine, going to bed and rising at a similar time each night to help regulate your internal body clock.
- 12 Set the mood for sleep by establishing a regular bedtime routine such as checking security, brushing your teeth, turning down the bed and setting your alarm clock.
- 13 If something is worrying you write it down and promise yourself you'll deal with it in the morning – don't take worries to bed with you.
- 14 Some people find a warm, milky drink before bed helps them relax - hot milk with cinnamon or nutmeg is better than chocolaty drinks that contain some caffeine. But avoid late drinks if you regularly wake at night to visit the bathroom - a full bladder is guaranteed to disturb your rest.
- 15 Make sure your bedroom is dark. Switch off all lights, and fully draw the curtains, which should be well-lined to block out all light. You may need an additional black-out blind during summer.
- 16 Make sure your bedroom is quiet, and a comfortable temperature - 18 to 22°C is ideal.
- 17 Place a few drops of relaxing lavender essential oil on a hanky and tuck it near your pillow, or use a sachet of dried lavender flowers.
- 18 If menopausal hot flushes and night sweats wake you, keep a fan in your room to cool you down; top your bed with layers (sheet and duvet, or sheet and blankets) so you can quickly reduce your coverings. Herbal remedies such as those containing Black Cohosh have been used to help reduce menopausal symptoms, too. MenoHerb® is a traditional herbal medicinal product used

### Did you know?

Females tend to sleep longer than men up to around the age of 55.



for the relief of symptoms of the menopause, such as hot flushes, night sweats, and temporary changes in mood (such as nervous irritability and restlessness), exclusively based upon long-standing use as a traditional remedy. Always read the label

- 19 Many people find that sleeping in silk sheets/duvet cover and pillow cases helps to regulate night-time temperature and humidity. As a bonus, silk pillowcases don't wrinkle, so you don't wake up with creased skin.
- 20 Take a relaxing herbal remedy, such as valerian root extracts, half an hour before going to bed. It is traditionally used to reduce sleep disturbance due to mild anxiety. Valerian root extracts have been used to help you achieve a refreshing, natural night's sleep. It is reported to have positive effects on sleep structure, helping you to slip more quickly down into the deeper levels of slow-wave sleep.

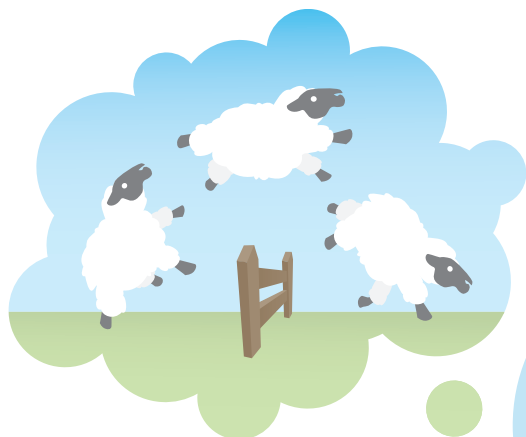
# Counting Sheep...

You want to achieve a good sleep efficiency, which is the ratio of the total time you spend asleep at night, divided by your total time in bed.

## Time asleep Time in bed

If you fall asleep soon after going to bed, and snooze throughout the night, you have high sleep efficiency (eg 90%). If you toss-and-turn, finding it difficult to nod off, or wake several times during the night, however, you have a low sleep efficiency (eg 70%).

A good way to help fall asleep is to concentrate on something that occupies your brain and blocks out random thoughts which often keep you awake. Counting sheep is one of the most popular ways of doing this. Don't count hyperactive, bouncy sheep jumping over a fence, though – count fluffy sheep in a flock, contentedly munching or snoozing quietly on the grass.



### Did you know?

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It's thought that sexual activity increases the need for sleep, and can help you doze off but, perhaps surprisingly; this has not really been studied.

### Did you know?

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An abnormally high sleep efficiency of greater than 95% is typically seen in people with excessive sleepiness (hypersomnia).



# Q&A

with Dr Sarah Brewer

Dr Sarah Brewer qualified as a doctor from Cambridge University. After working in general practice and sexual health, she now specialises in health communication and is an award-winning health writer.



for you. If you feel fit and refreshed during the day, you are probably getting all the sleep you need. If that is the case, make use of your new-found hours by developing a relaxing hobby you can indulge at any hour such as reading, painting, or writing your memoirs. Having said that, older people can suffer from sleep disturbance too. The give-away signs include feeling tired and listless during the day, yawning a lot, and feeling unusually irritable or snappy.

**Q I suffer from panic attacks which keep me awake. Can anything help me deal with situations better, so I can relax?**

**A** Panic attacks are usually linked with over-breathing, so you breathe out too much carbon dioxide gas. This makes your blood more alkaline and affects the way messages travel through your nervous system, leading to symptoms such as pins-and-needles, dizziness and feelings of panic. If you find yourself breathing quickly, or feel panic rising, try to slow your breathing – breathing in and out of your cupped hands (or the traditional brown paper bag) helps you breathe back some of the lost carbon dioxide.

**Q I've suffered from broken sleep for over 20 years. I now typically have 2 hours sleep, then 3 hours awake, followed by another 3 hours sleep. Surely I need more than 5 hours a night?**

**A** Most people need less and less sleep as they get older; and it may be that 5 hours is right

**Q I recently experienced a bereavement and find I can't sleep for the first time in my life. I lie awake tossing and turning. Is this normal?**

**A** Whether it's the loss of a parent, partner, child, family pet or close friend, the loss of a loved one is a devastating experience that causes an enormous amount of anxiety. Sleep problems such as difficulty getting off to sleep, waking early, or experiencing disturbing dreams are a normal part of the grieving process. As sleep is also one of nature's healers, it's important to get as good a night's rest as you can. When it's your partner who has died, the bedroom is associated with memories of them, and it may help to move into a spare room for a while, or – even better – stay with relatives or friends. Alternatively, ask someone you are close to if you can phone them before going to bed, so you can voice any worries or thoughts that might otherwise stop you sleeping.