

How to Use Sleep Medication While Training to Become a Better Sleeper

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If you read the section entitled [Psychophysiological Insomnia](#) you will understand that insomnia has a lot to do with conditioning and habit. If your goal is to eventually train yourself to sleep well without medication, then you need to establish a few habits about medication that will not make your insomnia conditioning worse.

If you are going to take sleeping medication while training yourself to become a better sleeper, there are two important rules:

1. You need to take it before you go to bed
2. You need to take it every night

You want to learn to associate the bed with good sleep. Therefore, you don't want to do anything in bed other than sleep or sex. This means you do not want to be thinking in bed. Otherwise, you will reinforce the bed as a place to think. You do not want to be lying in bed for a while gathering data about how long you have been lying there awake and deciding whether or not you are going to take a sleeping pill. You need to take the sleeping pill before you go to bed so you are not thinking about whether you are going to take it after you go to bed. Thinking about taking a sleeping pill will make your sleep worse.

You also do not want to take a sleeping pill when you wake up during the night. If you do, then you will reinforce the habit of having to wake up every night in order to take a sleeping pill in order to go back to sleep.

This program is about re-conditioning good sleep. Conditioning requires consistency whether you are training children, animals, or yourself. If you take a sleep aid some nights and not other nights, then your sleep is not going to be consistent. On the nights you take it you sleep better. On the nights you do not take it you are guaranteed a bad night. You will never train yourself to become a good sleeper this way by frequently having bad nights. If you are going to take a sleep aid, then you need to decide if you are going to take it every night or not at all. If you only need it once in while, then you do not really need it. Instead, use the strategies discussed in this website to help you become a good sleeper every night.

However, if you find your sleep aid helps you sleep significantly better and you are taking it most nights, then you should probably just take it every night while you are working on your sleep program. If you stop it now, your sleep will significantly deteriorate and prevent the sleep conditioning program from being effective.

Remember that once you are sleeping well and getting enough sleep to feel rested, you will be able to get off your sleep medication fairly easily. The more consistent you are with the program, the quicker this will happen. If you try going off of sleeping medication before you have trained yourself to sleep well and before you are feeling fully rested, then it will likely be quite difficult.

For more information on properly weaning off sleep medication, go to the section entitled, [*"Getting Off Your Sleep Medication"*](#).