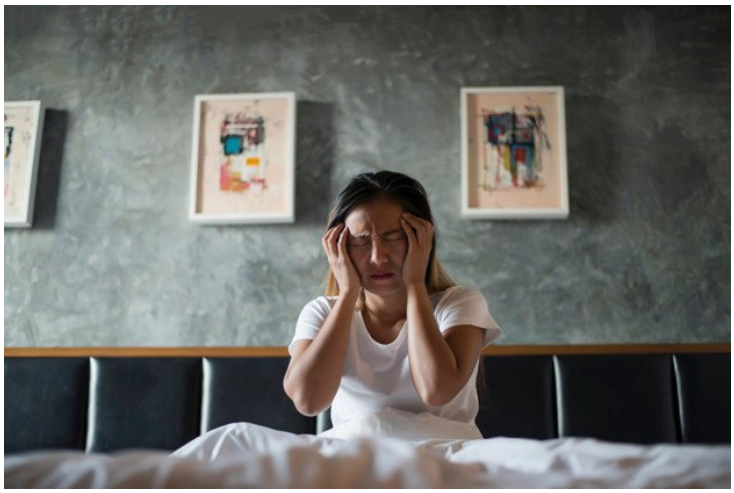
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Singapore explores mindfulness-based sleep therapy to treat insomnia

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Mindfulness-Based Therapy demonstrates a favorable valid alternative treatment for insomnia for failed standard frontline therapies



Researchers from the Centre for Sleep and Cognition at the NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine found mindfulness-based therapy to be more effective than an active sleep hygiene programme in improving sleep quality.

This study is the first preregistered and adequately powered trial to test sleep-targeted mindfulness-based therapy as a treatment for insomnia.

Currently, insomnia is treated with either medication or psychological interventions. However, even frontline treatments such as cognitive-behavioural therapy have limitations – up to 40% of patients do not get relief from their insomnia symptoms after undergoing this treatment.

To search for alternative approaches to treat insomnia, Principal Investigator Assistant Professor Julian Lim from the Centre for Sleep and Cognition at the National University of Singapore's (NUS) Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, together with the Singapore General Hospital's Department of Psychology, looked towards mindfulness-based treatment.

Mindfulness is the awareness of moment-to-moment thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations, and the practice of accepting these experiences without judging or reacting to them. Backed by scientific evidence, practicing mindfulness is becoming increasingly popular as a means to reduce stress, treat mental health problems, and improve general well-being.

The randomised controlled study compared a Mindfulness-Based Therapy for Insomnia (MBTI) with an active Sleep Hygiene, Education, and Exercise Programme (SHEEP) to see if the former could improve sleep outcomes in older adults with sleep complaints. The study has been reported in the journal Psychological Medicine.