

# LEARN TO LIVE BULLETIN

*Your guide in wellness and mental health*

## Welcoming Sleep to Restore and Maintain Our Health

Another night of tossing and turning. The alarm blares and you drag yourself out of bed feeling more exhausted than when you went to sleep. Your mind is foggy, your body slow, and the simplest tasks seem overwhelming. What if your struggle with sleep is more than just an inconvenience and may be contributing to some of your bigger health challenges?

Sleep is not just passive rest – a good night's sleep allows active healing and restoration. During sleep, our brain can consolidate memories, our immune system is strengthened, and our body repairs damaged tissue. All this healing and restoration keeps us mentally and physically well, but it is not possible if we aren't able to get the sleep we need.

Now, one night of poor sleep won't disrupt our entire well-being, but research shows that chronic sleep deprivation is linked to serious health conditions, including depression, anxiety, cardiovascular disease, and compromised immune function. So how can you optimize your sleep to feel well-rested and keep your mind and body healthy? The single most impactful solution for Insomnia according to research is CBT-i (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for insomnia). CBT-i has even been proven more effective than sleep medications, and almost anyone who struggles with sleep can benefit from it, even if they don't suffer from clinical insomnia.



## Quick Tips for Restorative Sleep

**Check for Medical Conditions.** Before applying CBT-i strategies, it's crucial to consult with a medical professional and rule out potential underlying medical conditions. A consultation can help identify potential issues like sleep apnea or narcolepsy that might be disrupting your sleep patterns.

**Wake up well.** We all have a biological clock that regulates our sleep-wake cycle. Establishing a regular wake up time signals our bodies that it's time to start the day. Try to get active right away and expose your eyes to bright daylight. Both are important in resetting your bio clock.

**Create a sleep-welcoming environment.** You can tailor your bedroom to promote optimal sleep conditions. This means creating complete darkness by blocking out all light sources, removing or turning around clocks to prevent anxiety-inducing time-watching, and maintaining a cool room temperature.

**Follow a few lifestyle guidelines.** Lifestyle choices throughout the day can substantially impact your nighttime sleep quality. Try to finish any exercise at least 1 hour before bedtime, avoid caffeine consumption 6 hours prior to sleep, and limit alcohol intake to 3 hours before bedtime.

## Get Started Today

By understanding sleep's impact on health and applying proven strategies, you can begin to reclaim your nights. If you're struggling with sleep, consider starting in Learn to Live's Insomnia program. You can also learn more about your overall mental health needs by taking a quick assessment. Start by scanning or visiting [learntolive.com/partners](https://learntolive.com/partners) and enter access code **MMHG**. Learn to Live is available to you and your family members, ages 13 and older at no cost.

