

SLEEP RESTRICTION THERAPY

One of the most effective treatments for insomnia is sleep restriction therapy (SRT). There have been numerous studies over the years that have confirmed the efficacy of this treatment option. The bad news: it's not easy and may take a few weeks. The good news: You've probably suffered worse and it only takes a few weeks. Sleep restriction therapy is a treatment that is based on the idea that people with insomnia spend too much time in bed. Time spent awake in bed is thought to contribute to subsequent nights of wakefulness, [sleep fragmentation](#), or poor-quality sleep.

Step one: determine wake time: _____

Step two: determine beginning in bed/sleep time (no less than 5 hours before wake time). _____

-Keep this schedule for at least three nights, maybe longer, until you feel as though you are sleeping 80% of the time spent in bed.

Example: in bed – 12am, wake time 6 am. Took 25 minutes to fall asleep, woke up once but was able to fall back asleep within 5 minutes. That means I slept for approximately 5 hours and 35 minutes out of the 6 hours in bed ($5.5/6 = .91$ or 91%). That means that my sleep efficiency for that night was 91%. If I can maintain a sleep efficiency > 80% for the next two nights then the sleep time may be increased by 30 minutes (i.e get into bed at 11:30 pm).

Continue to increase the sleep time by 30 minutes every 3 nights as sleep efficiency = 80%.

*Important things to remember:

Continue waking up at the same time each morning (no matter how tired you are). It is OK to take a short nap < 45 minutes during the day if needed.

Avoid driving or engaging in other hazardous activities during the first few days of therapy or if you are excessively sleepy.

Don't move the sleep time back too quickly. This is a common mistake where people who have slowly moved the sleep time from 12am to 11:30 but then skipped back to 10 pm. This is not helpful and usually undoes all the hard work.