



Growing evidence has shown that high-performance athletes have sleep difficulties before competitions, during intense training, and after long-distance travel and that fatigue and anxiety caused by poor sleep directly impact training and competition. Training schedules, increased levels of pre-competition arousal, and delayed sleep time due to using electronic devices before bedtime are usually the main factors affecting sleep among high-performance athletes¹.



Sleep is essential for general well-being and maximum athletic performance. It is necessary for:

- Tissue repair
- Cardiovascular health
- Mood regulation
- Immune system functioning
- Mental wellness
- Memory
- Cognitive functioning²

Sleep Disturbance is marked by

- Any significant change in both the quality or quantity of sleep while going to sleep or staying asleep
- Feeling drowsy during the day
- Other disturbances that are associated with sleep (i.e. nightmares)

Implications of Chronic Sleep Disruption

- Slowed perception and reaction time
- Increased rates of injury
- Interference with cognitive abilities
- Aerobic capacity
- Sprint capacity
- Increased rates of anxiety and depression



PREVALENCE

20-25% of Canadians are dissatisfied with their sleep. Among these, some have insomnia (a disorder characterized by severe trouble falling or staying asleep). When the sleep difficulty occurs at **least three nights per week** and continues for **at least three months**, it is called chronic insomnia disorder (CID). At least 10% of the Canadian adult population have CID. Athletes experience insomnia at rates as high or much higher than the national average. Sleep disturbances can lead to a host of other physical and mental illnesses, so it is essential to monitor for these if you experience sleep disturbances or CID.



TREATMENT STRATEGIES

The recommended first treatment for chronic insomnia is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I). Research has shown that this psychological treatment effectively improves sleep, reduces fatigue, increases daily functions, and improves mood. Research demonstrates that 70-80% of people with insomnia benefit significantly from four to six sessions of CBT-I and continue to have improved sleep for months or years. CBT-I is as effective as or more effective than sleep medications and produces longer-lasting improvements in sleep.



TIPS FOR MANAGING SLEEP DISTURBANCES

Good sleep hygiene is important for a good night's sleep. Some examples of how to better your sleep hygiene are:

Cutting down on caffeine at bedtime (based on individual sensitivity):

- Around 47mg of caffeine (i.e. one cup of black tea) is “safe” to consume until bedtime.
- Around 107 mg of caffeine (i.e. a cup of coffee) should be consumed more than approximately nine hours before bedtime to avoid sleep loss effects.
- Around 217 mg of caffeine (i.e. a cup of pre-workout supplement) should be consumed more than 13 hours before bedtime to avoid sleep loss effects.



Create a conducive sleep environment:

- Minimize exposure to light and noise from devices like **phones, computers, or televisions** while in bed.
- Ensure your sleeping environment is comfortable, adjusting the temperature to your preference (cooler temperatures are typically preferable).



Practice relaxation techniques:

- Engage in relaxation methods such as progressive muscle relaxation, diaphragmatic breathing, and imagery.



Adjust your mindset:

- Avoid worrying if you don't fall asleep immediately. Allow your body and mind to relax, appreciating the opportunity to rest without other obligations at that moment.

CONTACT YOUR COPSIN GAME PLAN ADVISOR OR MENTAL HEALTH LEAD FOR MORE INFORMATION ON SLEEP AND TO GET CONNECTED TO THE RIGHT RESOURCES.