

## A systematic Review of Homoeopathic Treatment for Insomnia

### Una revisión sistemática del tratamiento homeopático para el insomnio

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#### ABSTRACT

Insomnia is one of the most frequently countered condition, yet it is the most neglected condition as well. The review of articles published and various studies done on treatment of insomnia with homoeopathy is essential to know the utility and effectiveness of Homoeopathic treatment. The other methods of treatment for insomnia are responsible for drug dependence and many adverse effects. Numerous articles were studied from electronic databases like Medline, PubMed, SCOPUS etc. The detailed study of various types of articles were done based on Homoeopathy and insomnia to know the effectiveness of the homoeopathic drugs. Total 6123 articles were studied and depending on criterion for inclusion and exclusion a total of 36 publications were chosen for the investigation. The study concludes that Homoeopathic treatments are effective and long term beneficial though more research is necessary.

Keywords: Insomnia, review, Homoeopathy, effective, dependence, adverse effects.

#### INTRODUCTION

The most prevalent form of sleep problem is insomnia, yet not frequently researched. Insomnia has less immediate effects but the long-term effects are more than that of other disorders. Insomnia has a substantial negative influence on the physical, mental, and emotional health of older people as well as their ability to function in daily life. Long term insomnia effects are seen on health, working capacity and socio-economic sphere, it deranges the QoL of the individual. <sup>[1]</sup>

Insomnia is characterized as the inability to initiate or maintain sleep, problems with having enough time and space to sleep, and daytime effects. For a three-month period, with a frequency requirement of at least three times each week. <sup>[2,3]</sup>

Insomnia in general is a very subjective matter. Enough sleep is essential for proper wear and tear of the body as well as brain and is responsible for the efficient functioning of the body next day. <sup>[4]</sup> However, as it

does not show any immediate effects on the body, patients become habituated to it and neglect the effects it produces on the body. <sup>[5]</sup>

#### Prevalence:

Various epidemiological studies around the world are conducted to understand the prevalence of insomnia. Insomnia is a condition which most of the times remains undiagnosed and untreated. A review article on the prevalence of insomnia in India and in World by Bhattacharya et al concluded that around 25-30 % of population complaints of insomnia and around 50% population with insomnia has comorbid conditions. <sup>[6]</sup> According to research by Panda et al, 18.6% of patients in the age category of 35.1 +/- 8.7 years reported having insomnia. Of these individuals, 42.6% had hypertension. <sup>[7]</sup> In a questionnaire-based study conducted by Suri et al., 28.1% of the 2475 respondents in the 30 to 60 year age range who participated reported experiencing problems with sleep beginning and maintenance. <sup>[8]</sup>

Research by N. Yardi et al suggested that most common comorbid conditions with those having insomnia are anxiety, hypertension, and depression. In the same study it was found that as large as 96.4% of the population with insomnia was newly diagnosed to have insomnia after the survey. This shows the severity of number of undetected cases of insomnia. <sup>[9]</sup>

#### Effects on economic background:

Insomnia affects the economy directly and indirectly. The economic burden of insomnia in Canada was studied by Daley et al which suggested the impact on various factors of economy like medications, Alcohol, productivity, Absenteeism, road traffic Accidents etc. The research concluded that the direct and indirect economic expenditure caused by insomnia is greater than the expenditure of the treatment of insomnia. <sup>[10]</sup>

#### Current treatments for insomnia:

Current treatments available for insomnia are psychological, behavioural, and pharmacological. Although these treatments are efficient, they only focus on the treatment of insomnia and do not aim at the cause that may be underlying <sup>[11]</sup> i.e., systemic, or mental comorbidity. The pharmacological treatments include melatonin agonist ramelteon, sedating antidepressant doxepines, benzodiazepines, non-benzodiazepines. <sup>[12]</sup> These medicines cause drug dependence and have well-known systemic side effects such as poor motor coordination, vertigo, slurred speech, blurred vision, mood swings, and euphoria. Whereas Homoeopathy is individualised medicine therapy hence it not only focuses on the complaint of insomnia but also on the other comorbidities and associated symptoms. <sup>[13]</sup>

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

For the review, the following electronic databases were searched: Medline, EMBASE, PubMed, COCHRANE, Scopus, and Google Scholar. For searching various articles and researches related to the topic, keywords for Homoeopathy as, "Homoeopathic," "Homoeopathy," "Potentized" were used. While for the search of Insomnia, Words used were, "Insomnia," "Sleep" only.

Numerous Clinical trials, Observational studies, Review articles, and In vitro studies were identified and reviewed as a result of the thorough search.

**Inclusion Criteria:**

Research studies related to Homoeopathic Treatment for insomnia are selected for the review. Full article texts were studied and selected for the review. Total number of articles included in the study were 36.

**Exclusion criteria:**

Research articles based on treatments other than homoeopathy were excluded from the study. The study did not include any studies that dealt with insomnia brought on by an absence of sleep-promoting conditions.

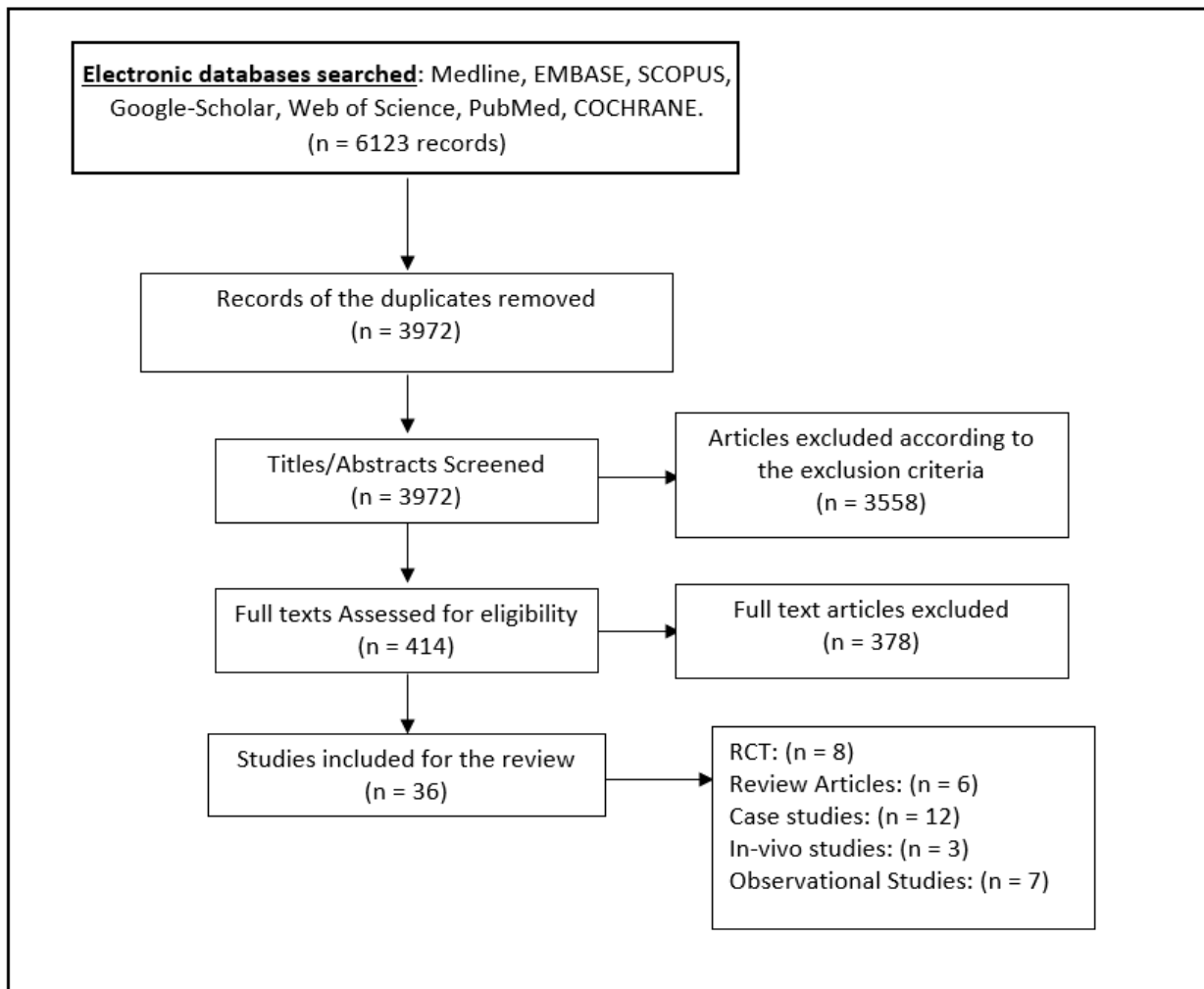


Figure 1: Identification of studies via databases



Table 1: Various studies and their discussion included in the review.

Sr. No.	Article, Author	Study Type	Population	Intervention	Control	Outcome Measures	Results	Conclusion
1.	Michael J. et al. <sup>[14]</sup> (May 2017- June 2018)	Randomized, blinded, and Placebo regulated clinical trial.	The inclusion and exclusion criteria led to the selection of a total of 60 participants. 55 people finished the study, only 5 dropped out (2 from the verum group and 3 from the control group). Age range of 18 to 60 for both sexes.	Homoeopathic medications prescribed individually in centesimal or 50 millesimal potencies for three months Medications Taken: Natrum Muriaticum and Nux Vomica were the two most often utilised medications (n = 10 and 6 respectively).	Placebo prescription, 4 Cane sugar Globules with Rectified Spirit identical to the Medicinal product.	Sleep Diary: Daily record of sleep wake pattern with timings of retiring to bed, total time in bed, time of arising etc. Insomnia Severity Index: Measurement tool which gives the quantitative index of sleep impairment	In Verum Group: Improvement of ISI score and Improvement of 5 items of Sleep diary was seen out of 6 items. In Control group: Improvement of ISI score was seen, with only item 6 was improved from Sleep diary.	It is found that there is a statistically significant difference between homoeopathy and a placebo in terms of sleep efficiency, total sleep time, time in bed, and ISI score.
2.	DF Naude et al. <sup>[15]</sup> (2010)	Randomized, blinded, and Placebo regulated clinical trial	A total of 30 patients were chosen for the investigation. 16 were in the placebo group, while 14 were in the therapy group.	Indicated Individualized Homoeopathic medicine was prescribed and suitable potency was given. Only 3 doses were	Placebo prescription was given as lactose powder and globules with 96% ethanol which were indistinguishable from the medicinal product.	Sleep Diary: Daily record of sleep wake pattern with timings of retiring to bed, total time in bed, time of arising etc.	In treatment group: The baseline Sleep Diary record and the Week 2, Week 3, and Week 4 records all showed a substantial difference.	The conclusion is that the homoeopathic similimum is superior than the placebo treatment.

			given to be taken for 3 consecutive nights.			Sleep Impairment Index: An assessment test with 7 items that provides a quantitative measure of sleep impairment.	At the conclusion of week 4, the therapy group had significantly improved (11/11). In Control Group: Between the baseline record of the sleep diary and any of the weeks, there was no discernible difference. The SII score (0/11-4/11) in the placebo group remained unchanged.	
3.	Jong M. C. et al <sup>[16]</sup> (2016)	The study was prospective, multicentered, randomised, open label, and controlled.	Based on stringent inclusion and exclusion criteria, 179 kids in total were chosen for the study. young children up to the age of six.	Homoeopathic Tablets in ZinCyp - 3-02 Tablets containing amniotic acid and glycine were given to children in one group and another group as the comparative medication..	Amniotic acid glycine tablets were administered to the control group as a substitute medication. (Glycine 100 mg)	Complaint severity score: Researchers evaluated it based on parents' responses at each research visit (day 0, days 3-5, day 14 and day 28). Integrative Medicine	In treatment group: From a median of 7.0 points at the start of the investigation to 2.0 points on day 28, the overall complaints severity score fell. ZinCyp-3-02 had better treatment efficacy and satisfaction ratings.	In conclusion, ZinCyp-3-02 received higher ratings for therapy efficacy and patient satisfaction. Treatment with ZinCyp-3-02 from homeopathy was

				ZinCyp- 3- 02 tablets: Complex medicinal product of 3 medicines: Cyprepedium pubescens, Magnesium carbonicum, Zincum valerianicum. It was given in 89 children. Glycine- Tablets containing aminoacetic acid and glycine (containing 100mg glycine per tablet) 90 kids received it.		Satisfaction Scale (IMPSS): Assessment of treatment tolerability.	When compared to the comparative drug glycine, treatment with ZinCyp-3-02 from homoeopathy was determined to be both safe and effective. In comparator group: At day 28, the overall complaints severity score dropped from a median of 7.0 points to 4.0 points.	discovered to be secure and superior to the comparator drug glycine.
4.	Gitanjali B. et al. [17] (2010)	Single blind placebo-controlled trial	58 healthy volunteers were selected. Exclusion criteria: Volunteers who smoked, required alcohol on a daily basis or more than three times per week,	The healthy volunteers were separated into five groups. Placebo (n = 12), Nux vomica (n = 13), Coffea cruda (n = 10), Passiflora incarnata (n = 13), and Kali phosphorum (n = 10)	Placebo was given to a group of 12 volunteers according to drug testing protocol.	The serum cortisol level and melatonin levels were assessed before and after the intervention. Along with that in the morning a set of 11	showed 38.1% responded to nux vomica, 23.1% to coffea cruda. None responded to Passiflora incarnata, kali phosphoricum and placebo. Those volunteers showing	The study's conclusion was that homoeopathic medicines don't work by preventing melatonin from

underwent pharmacological therapy for specific systemic or metabolic conditions, had insomnia, anxiety, pain, or sleep disorders, lacked motor coordination, worked shifts, or were female.

were the four pharmacological interventions employed in the groups.

psychomotor tests were done.

changes were being secreted. Additionally, it responders and those who do not show any change are non-responders. no alerting or hangover effects.

5. Bell I.R. et al. <sup>[18]</sup> (2011)
- Randomized, controlled trial. Placebo pellets are prescribed by single blind method. While the verum pellets are prescribed by double blind method.
- There were a total of 54 participants in the study who were between the ages of 18 and 31 who had either anxiety sensitivity or cynical hostility as well as insomnia brought on by coffee.
- Pellets of placebo are administered to all patients on night 8 and pellets of verum are administered on night 22. (Nux vomica or crud coffee)
- Indistinguishable placebo pellets were prescribed to all the subjects by single blind method on night 8.
- At-home Polysomnographic recordings on nights 1,2,8,9,15,16,22,23 was done which assesses the total sleep time and NREM. Sleep diary: Subjects maintained the sleep diary
- The PSG total sleep time and NREM, as well as awakenings and stage shift on the night the medicines were administered, were significantly increased, according to the results.
- The interpretation of this study is suggestive of positive effect of homoeopathic remedies which is supported by the increase in PSG total sleep time.



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						Pittsburgh sleep quality index scale was checked weekly Mood states scales were profiled on the nights of PSG monitoring.		
6.	Hejazi S. et al. <sup>[19]</sup> (2012)	Single-blind clinical trial.	90 volunteers having insomnia were selected for the study.	Coffea cruda and Valerian Officinalis were given to one of the research population's two groups, respectively.	There was no placebo control involved in the study.	3 questionnaires were used: Demographic, Pittsburgh sleep quality index and Standard Insomnia severity index (ISI).	The research revealed that coffea cruda has fewer negative effects and is more effective than herbal therapy.	Homoeopathic preparation Coffea cruda is superior than herbal medicine Valeriana Officinalis
7.	G Ruiz Vega et al. <sup>[20]</sup> (2002)	In-vivo controlled comparative study	For the study, 129 male wistar rats were chosen.	Two groups of 76 rats each were separated into three subgroups: control, caffeine (5 mg/kg), and coffea cruda 30C. Set I: 53 rats from Set II were split into three groups: Control, Caffeine (15.5	Control group was there in both set I and Set II.	Delta band features of brain wave was seen as the method of assessment.	In the delta band waves of the control and caffeine groups, no appreciable differences were found. The baseline for coffea cruda 30 and coffea cruda 200 underwent changes.	There was a difference between the baseline and coffea cruda 30c. Which implies that coffea cruda 200 has an impact on synchronization

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mg/kg), and Coffea  
cruda 200C.

whereas coffea  
cruda 30  
improves Delta  
power.

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## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the review total 6123 articles were found related to insomnia. After the screening, duplicates and articles not fulfilling the inclusion criteria were removed from the study. Total 36 studies were included for the review. These were randomized controlled trials, review articles, case study reviews, in-vivo studies, and observational studies. Details given in Figure 1.

Review of RCTs: Total 8 RCTs were studied for the review. These RCTs used polysomnographic tests or the insomnia severity score for outcome evaluation. One RCT also examined the serum melatonin and cortisol levels. Out of the eight RCTs examined, four utilized individualized homeopathic medicine as an intervention, two used targeted medication, and two used formula medications. All the studies resulted in a positive and significant change in complaints of insomnia after the Homeopathic treatment.

Review of Review articles: The review articles selected for the study were satisfactorily methodical, detailed and well evaluated. 2 articles only included the RCTs for their review while others included all the other types as well. The discussion and conclusion of one of the reviews suggested that the Homeopathic treatments are not significant in cases of Insomnia and recommended the need for more appropriate studies in the field. While other reviews showed a positive result with respect to homeopathy.

Review of Case Study: The case reports of various homeopaths were studied where indicated similimum was given to the patients (viz. Coffea cruda, Passiflora Q, Nux vom, Gelsemium semp. etc.) in suitable potency and repetition.<sup>[21,22]</sup> The results of all the case studies proposed that significant improvement in insomnia was seen after individualized homeopathic medicine was given.

Review of In-vivo studies: 2 in-vivo studies were reviewed for in-vitro studies. The studies were done on Albino rats. The EEG scan of brain was seen in the rats to assess the effects of homeopathic preparation. The changes in the brain waves of the rats were studied and the results implied that Homeopathic medicines are effective in the treatment of insomnia.

Review of observational studies: Seven observational studies in all were reviewed. Homeopathic remedies, 4 separate medications, and 3 combination medications were employed in these procedures. The results showed that improvement in symptoms of insomnia, anxiety was improved in patients receiving Homeopathic treatment.

As conclusion, the articles and literature studied through this review suggests that homeopathy is a positive and effective method of treatment for insomnia.<sup>[23,24]</sup> Though, more researches with large sample sizes especially randomized controlled trials and in-vivo studies will give better result and more validation for the use of homeopathy in cases of Insomnia.

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