

Weed for Insomnia? Best CBD, THC, CBN Ratios for Better Sleep

Even with the perfect temperature, white noise, and clear mind, you can't sleep. It's now day 30 with insomnia. Can you find relief?

What is insomnia?

Insomnia is one of the better known sleep disorders. A person with insomnia may have trouble falling to sleep and/or staying asleep. Short-term troubles indicate acute insomnia, while long-term is considered chronic insomnia. It can come and go over time, often impacted by other medical or external conditions.

Medical professionals consider up to a few weeks of occasional sleep problems to fall under "acute insomnia" which is often seen after a huge change in routine or stressful event. It becomes chronic for 3 or more nights per week for 3 months or more. Signs and symptoms of insomnia include:

- Excessive daytime sleepiness
- Fatigue
- Irritable mood
- Brain fog

Plus, in the case of chronic insomnia, the risk of long-term effects of sleep deprivation like depression, slowed and dangerous reaction times, and high blood pressure.

What types of insomnia are there?

Beyond "acute" and "chronic", there are quite a few different labels for insomnia. The main ones you'll hear include:

- **Primary insomnia:** your insomnia has no underlying health conditions, where insomnia is considered a symptom.
- **Secondary insomnia:** any insomnia you experience is a symptom or effect of other health conditions or outside influences, like medication.
- **Sleep-maintenance insomnia:** either difficulty with staying asleep or waking before you should.
- **Sleep-onset insomnia:** difficulty falling asleep or getting back to sleep.
- **Mixed insomnia:** perhaps most troublesome of all, people with mixed insomnia have trouble not only getting to sleep, but staying asleep!

What causes insomnia?

Acute insomnia is generally caused by a change in medication, stressful big life events - such as moving, jet lag, or a change in sleep environment. Research shows that some people are [genetically more likely to suffer from insomnia](#), which explains how some people can change shifts at work or adjust to a lot of international travel with minimal sleep interruption while others suffer greatly.

On the other hand, chronic insomnia is often caused by underlying medical conditions or behaviors. Depression, anxiety, physical pain at night, hormone problems, related sleep disorders, PMS and pregnancy, and ADHD are some of the underlying conditions which may lead to insomnia. Other medications, caffeine and sleep or work habits can also impact the chances and severity of insomnia for someone.

Getting relief for insomnia

The occasional acute insomnia - a night here, a night there - can be annoying, but generally left alone. For those who suffer routinely from insomnia, it can grow difficult to function at home and at work, and they often feel pretty miserable. In these cases, it's worth seeking relief. But, how? What should you look for?

Better sleep habits

Start with looking at your habits and lifestyle. Is there anything you can do to allow for better sleep? It may be adjusting your sleep hours, or cutting caffeine after lunch. Journal for a few weeks, taking note of what you consume that day and when, as well as what else you were doing. Then, take notes on your sleep (or lack-of). Are there patterns? What haven't you tried?

Here are some of our sleep tips:

- Sleep and wake at the same time every day, skipping naps if you're able.
- Avoid ingesting too many stimulants later in the day, like caffeine.
- Stick to old-school books, screentime can make it harder to doze off.
- Get active, but not too late in the day.
- Set up your room to be comfortable: not too warm, bright, or cold.
- It may sound counter-intuitive, but if it's been a while, get up and do a quiet activity like reading before trying to sleep again.

Talk to a medical professional

If you aren't already aware of one, there may be an underlying condition, making insomnia a symptom. You'll want to bring your sleep journal with you and review your options.

Supplements and medication for insomnia

Many people with insomnia decide to take a sleep aid. Sometimes, they're prescribed, but there are plenty of over-the-counter supplements, too. However, most of these do have side effects if taken for a long time (better for acute insomnia) and lose effectiveness.

Ideally, you'll treat any underlying or external causes to your insomnia while using a sleep aid and developing good sleep habits. Choosing the right sleep aid isn't so easy, though. Where do you start?

We recommend looking at cannabis.

Can weed help with insomnia?

Cannabis has been found to be an [effective](#) - to some extent, anyway - sleep aid. There are a few reasons for that, but the exact benefits depend on the person taking it, dose, ratio, strain...many factors to consider. Like all things marijuana, medical studies have been and continue to be very limited due to its federal status. That doesn't mean we have no evidence, though!

The catch is that, while we see evidence of cannabis being an [effective sleep aid](#), it may actually make sleep and insomnia *worse*. This usually results from consistent, heavy consumption of cannabis, particularly higher THC products. Speaking of, there are 3 commonly-found cannabinoids that impact sleep:

- **Tetrahydrocannabinol (THC):** The best known cannabinoid, responsible for the classic "high" effect, and known to make people sleepy. May make sleep worse with heavy ingestion over time.
- **Cannabidiol (CBD):** All the buzz in the wellness industry, but none of the buzz in your head, this cannabinoid comes with a lot of benefits and is a solid choice for people seeking relief without the "high."
- **Cannabinol (CBN):** Increasingly popular, this cannabinoid comes from THC breaking down over time. It's said to be the sleepest of the 3, but has a risk of a slight "high."

As a sleep aid, marijuana is most effective when you harness something called the *entourage effect*. It basically means combining different cannabinoids together in a ratio - like 1:1 CBN to THC - so they enhance each other's beneficial effects and ease the negatives.

Weed and primary insomnia

Since primary insomnia has no other underlying conditions, we have to look at how weed interacts with the brain and sleep hormones. [Melatonin](#) - one of the main hormones that impacts sleep and the primary one responsible for regulating our internal clocks - can be "off" in some people. They may not produce enough, or produce it during the day instead of at night.

The good news? THC increases the [production of melatonin](#) which can help get that internal clock back on track. Similarly, CBN has a reputation for being sedative and, while studies are sparse, [CBN combined with THC](#) seems to assist with sleep issues the most.

Weed and secondary insomnia

Secondary insomnia, being an umbrella term meaning any insomnia caused by other conditions, is where cannabis truly shines.

Many conditions can lead to insomnia, including [anxiety](#) and chronic pain. Weed often helps with a *lot* of sleep-disrupting conditions as it interacts with the ECS. Specific strains, ratios, and doses are hard to recommend reliably, as brain and body chemistry does vary and every situation is different.

What cannabinoid ratios are best for insomnia?

That isn't to say that there are some patterns to make recommendations from! Almost overwhelmingly, people report some sort of combination of cannabinoids to be more effective than any one of them alone. Most commonly available are [THC and CBD](#) or THC and CBN products. So, where should someone start? Here's a couple options:

- **1:1** – Equal amounts of both cannabinoids and the most intoxicating ratio if it contains THC. For sleep, THC:CBD may help with the more physical causes behind insomnia while THC:CBN may better address sleep directly.
- **5:1** – Usually paired with THC, this is an ideal ratio for people who don't want to feel the "high" as much and/or want to boost their dose of either CBD or CBN.

There are other combinations and ratios out there, but either of these two are a solid start. Be sure to track its effects so you can make adjustments as needed. And, always, go low and slow.

Finding your own insomnia relief

Ultimately, you need to understand the causes behind your insomnia, as well as its intensity. Once you've reflected on that and decided the best method of consumption, you can get started.

Here at Pantry, we created a healthy - yet delicious - edible with the intention to help people sleep better. Low in sugar, our [Nite Bites](#) contain melatonin, other sleep-inspiring herbs, and a solid ratio of 1:1 CBN to THC. Our Nite Bites bring together the best ingredients for those seeking a gentle, yet effective, relief to insomnia.