paroxysmal nocturnal dyspnea. Many women experience poor sleep with the hormonal changes of menopause. Gastroesophageal reflux is also a common cause of difficulty sleeping.

Neurologic Disorders Dementia (Chap. 35) is often associated with poor sleep, probably due to a variety of factors, including napping during the day, altered circadian rhythms, and perhaps a weakened output of the brain's sleep-promoting mechanisms. In fact, insomnia and nighttime wandering are some of the most common causes for institutionalization of patients with dementia, because they place a larger burden on caregivers. Conversely, in cognitively intact elderly men, fragmented sleep and poor sleep quality are associated with subsequent cognitive decline. Patients with Parkinson's disease may sleep poorly due to rigidity, dementia, and other factors. Fatal familial insomnia is a very rare neurodegenerative condition caused by mutations in the prion protein gene, and although insomnia is a common early symptom, most patients present with other obvious neurologic signs such dementia, myoclonus, dysarthria, or autonomic dysfunction.

TREATMENT INSOMNIA

Treatment of insomnia improves quality of life and can promote long-term health. With improved sleep, patients often report less daytime fatigue, improved cognition, and more energy. Treating the insomnia can also improve the comorbid disease. For example, management of insomnia at the time of diagnosis of major depression often improves the response to antidepressants and reduces the risk of relapse. Sleep loss can heighten the perception of pain, so a similar approach is warranted in acute and chronic pain management.

The treatment plan should target all putative contributing factors: establish good sleep hygiene, treat medical disorders, use behavioral therapies for anxiety and negative conditioning, and use pharmacotherapy and/or psychotherapy for psychiatric disorders. Behavioral therapies should be the first-line treatment, followed by judicious use of sleep-promoting medications if needed.

TREATMENT OF MEDICAL AND PSYCHIATRIC DISEASE

If the history suggests that a medical or psychiatric disease contributes to the insomnia, then it should be addressed by, for example, treating the pain, improving breathing, and switching or adjusting the timing of medications.

IMPROVE SLEEP HYGIENE

Attention should be paid to improving sleep hygiene and avoiding counterproductive, arousing behaviors before bedtime. Patients should establish a regular bedtime and wake time, even on weekends, to help synchronize their circadian rhythms and sleep patterns. The amount of time allocated for sleep should not be more than their actual total amount of sleep. In the 30 min before bedtime, patients should establish a relaxing "wind-down" routine that can include a warm bath, listening to music, meditation, or other relaxation techniques. The bedroom should be off-limits to computers, televisions, radios, smartphones, videogames, and tablets. Once in bed, patients should try to avoid thinking about anything stressful or arousing such as problems with relationships or work. If they cannot fall asleep within 20 min, it often helps to get out of bed and read or listen to relaxing music in dim light as a form of distraction from any anxiety, but artificial light, including light from a television, cell phone, or computer, should be avoided, because light itself suppresses melatonin secretion and is arousing.

Table 38-2 outlines some of the key aspects of good sleep hygiene to improve insomnia.

TABLE 38-2 METHODS TO IMPROVE SLEEP HYGIENE IN INSOMNIA PATIENTS

Helpful Behaviors	Behaviors to Avoid
Use the bed only for sleep and sex • If you cannot sleep within 20 min, get out of bed and read or do other relaxing activities in dim light before returning to bed	Avoid behaviors that interfere with sleep physiology, including: • Napping, especially after 3:00 PM • Attempting to sleep too early • Caffeine after lunchtime
Make quality sleep a priority • Go to bed and get up at the same time each day • Ensure a restful environment (comfortable bed, bedroom quiet and dark)	In the 2–3 h before bedtime, avoid: • Heavy eating • Smoking or alcohol • Vigorous exercise
Develop a consistent bedtime routine. For example: • Prepare for sleep with 20–30 min of relaxation (e.g., soft music, meditation, yoga, pleasant reading) • Take a warm bath	When trying to fall asleep, avoid: • Solving problems • Thinking about life issues • Reviewing events of the day

COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY (CBT)

CBT uses a combination of the techniques above plus additional methods to improve insomnia. A trained therapist may use cognitive psychology techniques to reduce excessive worrying about sleep and to reframe faulty beliefs about the insomnia and its daytime consequences. The therapist may also teach the patient relaxation techniques, such as progressive muscle relaxation or meditation, to reduce autonomic arousal, intrusive thoughts, and anxiety.

MEDICATIONS FOR INSOMNIA

If insomnia persists after treatment of these contributing factors, pharmacotherapy is often used on a nightly or intermittent basis. A variety of sedatives can improve sleep.

Antihistamines, such as diphenhydramine, are the primary active ingredient in most over-the-counter sleep aids. These may be of benefit when used intermittently, but often produce rapid tolerance and can produce anticholinergic side effects such as dry mouth and constipation, which limit their use, particularly in the elderly.

Benzodiazepine receptor agonists (BzRAs) are an effective and well-tolerated class of medications for insomnia. BzRAs bind to the $GABA_A$ receptor and potentiate the postsynaptic response to GABA. $GABA_A$ receptors are found throughout the brain, and BzRAs may globally reduce neural activity and may enhance the activity of specific sleep-promoting GABAergic pathways. Classic BzRAs include lorazepam, triazolam, and clonazepam, whereas newer agents such as zolpidem and zaleplon have more selective affinity for the α_1 subunit of the $GABA_A$ receptor.

Specific BzRAs are often chosen based on the desired duration of action. The most commonly prescribed agents in this family are zaleplon (5–20 mg), with a half-life of 1–2 h; zolpidem (5–10 mg) and triazolam (0.125–0.25 mg), with half-lives of 2–4 h; eszopiclone (1–3 mg), with a half-life of 5–8 h; and temazepam (15–30 mg), with a half-life of 8–20 h. Generally, side effects are minimal when the dose is kept low and the serum concentration is minimized during the waking hours (by using the shortest-acting effective agent). For chronic insomnia, intermittent use is recommended, unless the consequences of untreated insomnia outweigh concerns regarding chronic use.

The heterocyclic *antidepressants* (trazodone, amitriptyline,[2] and doxepin) are the most commonly prescribed alternatives to BzRAs due to their lack of abuse potential and lower cost. Trazodone (25–100 mg) is used more commonly than the tricyclic antidepressants, because it has a much shorter half-life (5–9 h) and less anticholinergic activity.

Medications for insomnia are now among the most commonly prescribed medications, but they should be used cautiously. All sedatives increase the risk of injurious falls and confusion in the elderly, and therefore if needed, these medications should be used at the lowest effective dose. Morning sedation can interfere with driving and judgment, and when selecting a medication, one should

[2]Trazodone and amitriptyline have not been approved by the FDA for treating insomnia.