**Treatments for Insomnia**

Hi everyone, I am Dr. Greenfield, one of the child psychiatry doctors here at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics. Today I have the pleasure of having Yoda in my clinic. Despite being a Jedi master and one of the most powerful members of the Jedi order, poor Yoda is having some trouble sleeping. Another word for trouble sleeping is insomnia.

Yoda (Dr. Greenfield’s Yoda impersonation): “Ah yes, insomnia leads to grumpiness. Grumpiness leads family problems. Family problems leads to help from child psychiatry.”

Dr. Greenfield: I could not have said it better myself Yoda. Thank you so much for being here today. It is such an honor to have you here.

Yoda: “Hmmm, mine, the honor is.”

Dr. Greenfield: I understand you want to learn more about insomnia treatments. So where should we start? What questions do you have for me today?

Yoda: “Hmmm, treatments, what are they?”

Dr. Greenfield: Well, that is a great place to start Yoda. I guess the answers depends on what type of insomnia you have. If you have sleep apnea, then the doctors will give you a machine to use at night to help you breathe and sleep better.

Yoda: “Hmmm, what if sleep apnea I don’t have?”

Dr. Greenfield: Great question! For the type of insomnia that most people have, we first suggest learning about sleep hygiene.

Yoda: “Hmmm, understand I do, like brushing teeth while sleeping.”

Dr. Greenfield: Well, you are on the right track, but this is not dental hygiene. Sleep hygiene is covered in the other podcast episodes. You should listen to those.

Yoda: “Hmmm, listen. I will.”

Dr. Greenfield: Once you learn about sleep hygiene you can try to use those ideas.

Yoda: “Hmm, do or do not. There is no try.”

Dr. Greenfield: Well, these things are easier said than done. If you try to use the sleep hygiene ideas and are still having some trouble, I suggest to see a therapist who can give you a treatment called CBT-I.

Yoda: “Hmmm, alphabet soup, you speak?”

Dr. Greenfield: Yeah, a lot of therapies have a bunch of letters. This one stands for cognitive behavior therapy for insomnia.

Yoda: “Hmmm, complicated, it sounds.”

Dr. Greenfield: Well, it is a mouthful but it is not too complicated. It is where you work with a therapist for about 4-6 weeks. These therapists are the superheroes of sleep. They can help coach you through how be a sleep superstar.

Yoda: “Hmmm, superstar sleeper I will be.”

Dr. Greenfield: Yeah, that’s the idea! Research shows this is the best treatment for insomnia. It helps you with your thoughts and actions about sleep.

Yoda: “What if I look, but no therapist there is, or therapist there is, but wait list too long?”

Dr. Greenfield: Well, that would be sad if you could not find a therapist soon. There are some great ways of learning more about CBT-I online, and there are some awesome phone apps you can get.

Yoda: “Hmmm, technology, you say.”

Dr. Greenfield: Yeah, it is great that there are so many ways to get access to treatments these days. Ask your doctor about these resources. They will point you in the right direction.

Now, if this does not work, there are some medicines you can take that can help you sleep. They can be great but also have some side effects.

Yoda: “Side effects, Yoda no like.”

Dr. Greenfield: Yeah, me either so I recommend talking to your doctor about them.

Yoda: “Hmmm, more, I want to know.”

Dr. Greenfield: Well it is hard to go over all the medicines and to know which one will work for you. A common over-the-counter medicine that kids take is called Melatonin. It is the body’s natural sleep hormone in a pill!

Yoda: “Hmmm, hormone of sleep, you say?”

Dr. Greenfield: You said it! It is a good first option to discuss with your doctor. There are other medicines to try if Melatonin does not work.

Yoda: “Hmmm, many options there are.”

Dr. Greenfield: You got it Yoda. So, to summarize, it is important to know what type of insomnia you have. Sleep hygiene is a good first place to start. If you are having a hard time putting these recommendations into practice, you can find a therapist who can do CBT for insomnia with you. If you are having a hard time finding a therapist, ask your doctor about some online resources and phone apps. If that does not help, there are some medicines you can try. First you should talk to your doctor about it.

Dr. Greenfield: Well, thank you so much Yoda for coming today. I hope this has been helpful.

Yoda: “Helpful, indeed, very helpful.”

Dr. Greenfield: Alright, well take care and hope you get a good night sleep.

Yoda: “Hmm, grateful, I am, for your help.”