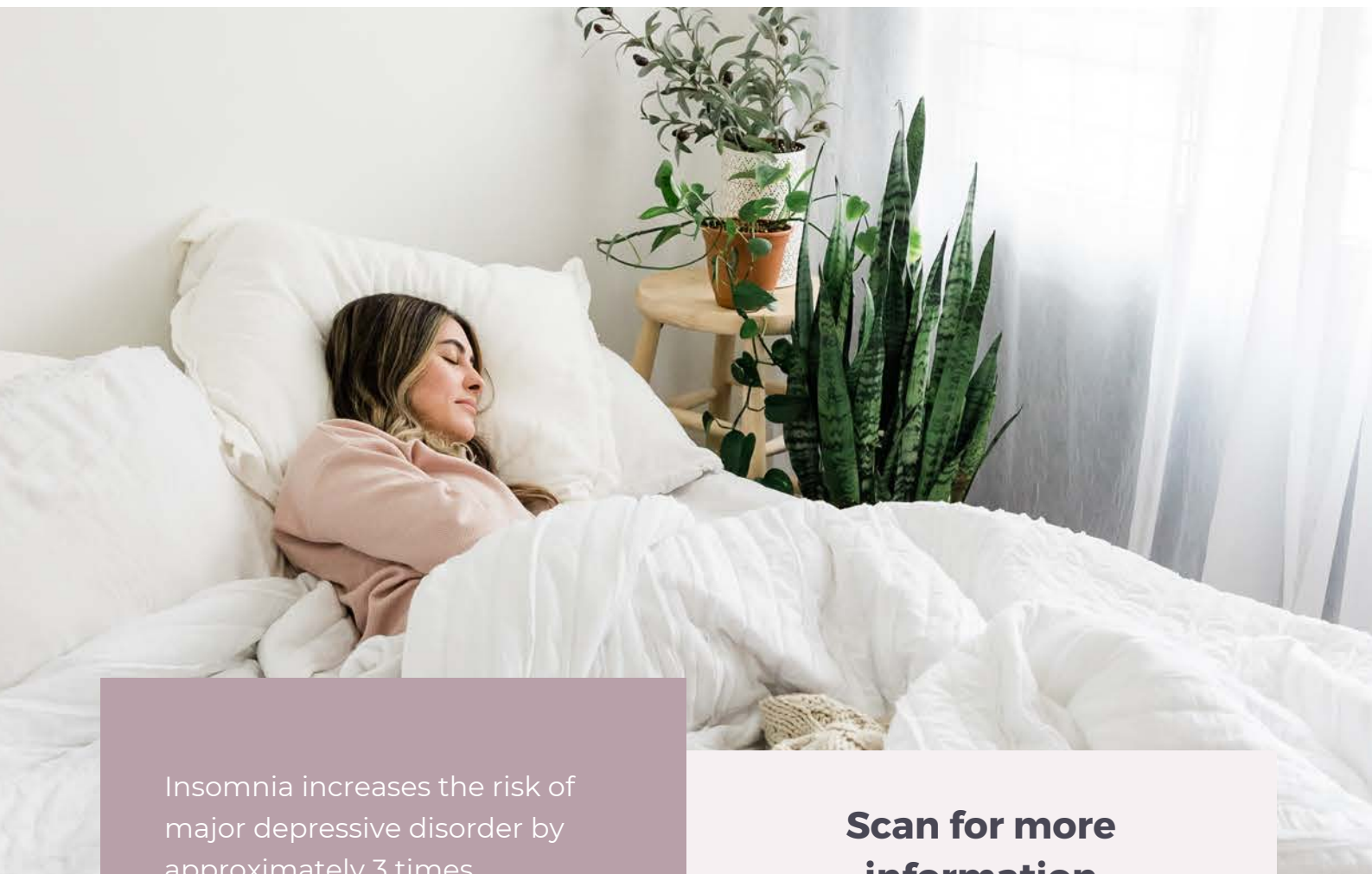


# Sleep hygiene



Insomnia increases the risk of major depressive disorder by approximately 3 times.

Similarly, most people who are experiencing a depressive episode report difficulties initiating and/or maintaining sleep.

Improving sleep quality can support a reduction in symptoms of depression.

**Scan for more information**



## Where do I start?

### **If you experience depression and poor sleep, it can be helpful to track your sleep habits using a sleep diary.\***

- Keeping a journal of what you do before, during and after sleep is important to understanding what's keeping you awake, and where you might make changes in your sleep routine.
- Many phone applications (apps) can help you to track sleep patterns, e.g., time needed to fall asleep, periods of wakefulness after sleep onset, total sleep time, time in bed, and number of awakenings, and subjective sleep quality.
- Phone apps do not necessarily allow you to track your activities before and after bed and when you wake up during the night.

## What do I do then?

### **Good sleep hygiene habits are associated with improvements in sleep. Good sleep hygiene can include:**

- Maintain a regular sleep schedule (+/- 20 minutes) every night, including weekends.
- Avoid daytime naps – they reduce our “sleep debt” and can make sleep more difficult.
- Avoid staying in bed awake for more than 5 or 10 minutes.
- Avoid artificial light in bed - avoid watching TV, or using your phone or your computer.
- Avoid caffeine after lunch time.
- Avoid substances like cigarettes, alcohol or over-the-counter medications that can affect sleep.
- Aim for a quiet, dark, and comfortable space to sleep in.
- Develop a calming routine before bed, like listening to calming music or having a warm cup of non-caffeinated tea.

## Where can I get help?

### **Psychologists, and particularly those who specialise in sleep disturbance, can support you to improve your sleep.**

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-I) is a specific type of treatment that has been found to be beneficial for treating insomnia.