

Sleep, interrupted

Learning How Rhythm, Routine, And Mental Clarity Help Restore Sleep

Youth Power is an annual social leadership programme organised by The Global Times, where different teams from Amity schools engage in varied social causes in several stages. One of them is 'Panel Discussion', where experts from different walks of life discuss various aspects of the chosen social cause. Here's presenting **Part IX** of this exclusive series, based on the panel discussions organised by YP teams for the year 2025-26, and a host of opinions and insights that experts shared on '**Insomnia**', the cause chosen by YP team of AIS Vasundhara 1.



Panelists decode the science of sleeplessness

Follow sleep hygiene conscientiously

Panellist: Parul Dubey,
consultant psychotherapist

"Not every sleepless night is an indication of insomnia. Insomnia happens only when difficulty in sleep occurs at least three times a week, and continues for over three months. The biggest myth is that one or two bad nights mean something is wrong. Instead of panicking, we should observe our patterns - what we are thinking, doing, and feeling. Today, when sleep doesn't come, we either scroll reels or search online instead of noticing the worries running in our mind - embarrassment, exams, comparisons, or stress.



Our bed has also lost its identity as a 'sleep space' because we eat, chat, and use our phones there. The brain no longer identifies it as a place for rest. Sleep depends on our biological clock, which naturally shifts during teenage years due to delayed melatonin release, so late sleep is normal. We must unload our mind through breathing exercises like the 4-7-8 method, journaling, and calming routines. The body loves rhythm and discipline, even on weekends. Sleep hygiene - timely meals, lighter dinners, reduced caffeine, and consistent habits - helps us understand the real drivers of sleep and correct the habits where we are going wrong."

Sleep is essential for better performance

Panellist: Dr Shailender Singh,
senior consultant, internal medicine

"To understand insomnia medically, we must look at two components - nighttime and daytime symptoms. Night symptoms include struggling to fall asleep, inability to maintain sleep, or waking untimely and not being able to return to sleep. But insomnia is diagnosed and considered clinically significant only when both components are present and affect an individual's daytime functioning - fatigue, low mood, poor concentration, memory issues,



reduced learning ability, or degradation in performance at school or work. Sporadic sleeplessness is not worrisome and requires no medication. Many try to compensate for lost sleep over the weekends, but it is not a debt to be repaid later, it needs consistency instead. Sleep is essential for memory consolidation, thus, short-term memories fail to convert into long-term memories. Treatment should avoid dependence on sleeping pills. Cognitive behavioral therapy helps by identifying sleep patterns, changing behaviour, and improving sleep hygiene. Managing habits and mental chaos can restore healthy sleep."

Sleep is a repairing process

Panellist: Dr Shallu Gupta, naturopathy & yoga specialist; chief medical officer, Samshudhi Wellness

"Sleep is the body's natural, cellular repairing process. Routine helps regulate dopamine, serotonin, and cortisol to be released at the right time. At a young age, insomnia usually results from overthinking, constant worry, hormonal imbalance, and screen exposure. Major causes also include poor food habits, junk and processed food, eating late, and ignoring the body's circadian rhythm. We must learn to wind down our day as evening arrives - eat early and create a strong association between the bed and sleep. Understanding how our organs function and respecting body timing is essential. The solution is simple - lighter meals, reduced screens, emotional release, and living with more ease."



Balanced diet improves

Panellist: Deepali Choudhary, dietician

"Many nutrient deficiencies are linked with poor sleep. Especially amongst females, deficiency of iron often leads to fatigue and nights of disturbed sleep. One of the primary steps is to identify whether the person is suffering from some sort of deficiency. The second step is dietary correction. Supplements may be necessary only if deficiency levels are severe and concerning. Nuts and seeds are rich in magnesium and essential fatty acids that support sleep regulation. The five major food groups that should be included in all meals are: cereals and grains, pulses or protein sources, fruits and vegetables, milk and milk products, and fats and oils. A balanced diet automatically provides the nutrients required for healthy sleep."



It's like landing a plane

Panellist: Saurabh K Singh, mindset shift and corporate leadership coach

"People believe insomnia to be an illness, but the fact is that we do not prepare our bodies for sleep. Sleep is similar to landing an airplane. When a plane lands, it cannot suddenly stop from flying at a fast pace; it needs a landing strip to gradually slow down. Similarly, our mind also needs a transition before sleep. Most of us try to sleep while our thoughts are still running at full speed. Your 'landing strip' is your thought pattern. You must slow down mentally - reduce stimulation and calm your thinking. Sleep cannot be forced; it happens when the mind gradually settles. When we consciously reduce mental speed and create a transition period for the mind, sleep comes naturally and effortlessly."



PART IX

EXPERT SPEAK

