



# Keeping up with ADD

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Greetings from the Attention Deficit & Hyperactivity Support Group of Southern Africa

**ADHASA**

Helping the community for nearly 16 years!

June 2005

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## CHILDREN WHO CAN'T SLEEP

This article targets children with AD/HD but the information could help non-ADD people too. Please make this news-letter available to anyone who could use it.

*Work's a mess, home's a mess and I'm a mess!! And I'm too tired to even care!*



It affects virtually every aspect of our lives, and undermines the effectiveness of everything we do. Tempers shorten, bickering becomes more common, moods darken, health deteriorates and self confidence is eroded. Situations become even worse if children effectively force their exhausted parents to sleep apart every night.

problems at a later date. Explore different solutions ... for some a night light might work; for others it may be sharing the bedroom with a brother or sister. Several parents have found their own solution of keeping a small mattress on the floor (usually on mum's side of the bed) so that the child can crawl into the 'bed' close to his parents but not disturb their sleep.



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*Our child is already six years old and still has awful night terrors, often waking up screaming. He crawls into our bed every single night but can't lie in one position for more than five minutes at a time. He moans, kicks, cries and flings his arms about and that's the end of our sleep for the night.*

*My husband's job is very demanding and he cannot carry on like this. He often resorts to sleeping in our son's bed which doesn't help our marriage at all. We fight a lot these days.*

#### **We all need our sleep**

Few things are worse than always being short of sleep!

#### **Different solutions**

Each and every child is different and so solutions that work for one child are not necessarily going to work for all. However the only way to find out what is going to work for you is to keep on trying, and to try different combinations of solutions until eventually you find suitable answers.

#### **Fearful**

Children have vivid imaginations and can be terrified of being alone in their bedroom, especially when it is dark. If a child is genuinely upset and fearful, insisting that he stays in his own bedroom is not necessarily the answer – in fact it may cause even bigger

#### **Night terrors**

A two week course of biotin frequently encourages more restful sleep and eliminates night terrors. If the diet does not supply adequate quantities of good wholesome food, then the biotin course might have to be repeated a few months or years down the line.

Find many answers at the ADHASA Seminar on July 23 and 30— A few seats still available!

### Healthier lifestyles

Many people who have struggled with their children's poor sleeping habits have found tremendous relief when introducing healthier lifestyles. Eating lifestyles can be improved by increasing the natural foods in the diet; and by eliminating synthetic colorants and flavorants, as well as transfatty acids, hydrogenated oils and antioxidant preservatives from the diet. (Remember that 'permitted' or 'approved' additives - flavorants and/or colorants - are to be **avoided** at all times.) The correct supplements, including essential fatty acids, give the body an added boost, enabling it to function at better levels.

These measures alone often help a child have a more settled night's sleep.



### Stabilise blood glucose levels

Rapidly fluctuating blood glucose levels, or blood glucose levels that are too low, can also prevent sound sleep. Try to ensure that children have balanced evening meals including starch (rice pasta, potatoes); some protein (meat, fish, eggs, or vegetable protein) and at least three different vegetables. Some children can't face a large plate of food – rather give them smaller portions and they can always ask for more.

Avoid major confrontations if children don't want to eat their evening meals. However, please don't allow drinks, biscuits, sweets, and pudding to replace their meals "Just to make sure that they eat *something!*" Always have fresh fruit, small raw vegetables and healthy snacks available – remember it isn't always healthy just because the wrapping says so!

Some children sleep far better if they have a small snack before going to bed, especially if there is a two hour gap (or more) between supper time and bed time. This snack could be as simple as a glass of warm milk and a low GI biscuit just before going to bed.

### Television

TV viewing should be kept to a minimum and be monitored. Especially avoid over-exciting or violent TV in the hour before bedtime.

### Worms

A child who frequently wakes at night could be disturbed by intestinal worms. Vermox syrup is preferable to the tablets (because they are coloured); there are also several excellent homeopathic remedies.

After a good breakfast Sally and her husband set out to explore the sights of the city. Six hours later, and no lunch, left her feeling weak and shaky, and all she could find was a chocolate-covered bar which she soon ate! Back at the hotel she had a good supper and decided on an early night because of the busy day ahead.

Usually she fell asleep quickly and easily ... but not that night. Sally couldn't settle, tossing and turning so much that her husband became irritable and angry. She took the only reading material available – a (boring) book on allergies – and sat in the bathroom to read. She read through the night and, as she finished the book, saw the first rays of sunlight on the horizon.

After an early breakfast they set out to climb hills and examine caves and Sally was amazed that she wasn't at all tired and that she had so much energy. She was able to keep on going and was awake for 40 hours before she finally was able to fall asleep!

The chocolate-covered bar had sent her glucose levels rocketing. It also contained several ingredients which she normally avoided. The combination of rapidly fluctuating blood glucose levels, too much sugar and food sensitivities made it impossible for her to sleep until their effects had worn off.. It was, she said, almost as if there was a tiny buzzer inside her head which she couldn't turn off ... and as long as it kept buzzing, sleep was impossible.

Many ADD children and adults have rapidly fluctuating blood glucose levels, allergies and sensitivities—to what extent could these difficulties be contributing to insomnia in a member of your family? Is it possible that a few small changes could turn your insomniac child into a sleeping baby?

### Bed time routine

Dad's rough play shortly before bed time can make children so excited that they can't sleep – come to an agreement with dad that he and the children can play rough on condition that he spends enough time settling the children down afterwards.

A bed time routine helps the child to relax as he prepares for the night. Children feel far more secure and are more likely to settle if one of their parents can actually take them to the bedroom, read a relaxing story and tuck them up for the night.

Soothing background music for a while before bedtime can help to mentally prepare children for bed.

### In addition

Insomnia in adults can be far more challenging especially as there are so many possible causes. It could, amongst others, be linked to stress, anxiety, sleep apnoea, depression, medication, coffee, cola drinks, alcohol, smoking, or nutrient deficiencies. It would be preferable to find and eliminate the cause of the insomnia rather than resorting to sleeping tablets but this is not always possible. Homeopathy may also have solutions to offer.

Sleeping patterns of ADD children (and adults) seem to be affected far more frequently than those of others. Insufficient sleep can interfere with everything thought, said or done, and can make life even more difficult for the already struggling child. The answer might be as simple as deworming, or a light bedtime snack, on the other hand it might demand a much greater effort as you eliminate the above possibilities (and maybe a few other) but finding the solution which ultimately allows you a better night's sleep would be well worth the effort.

*Heather Picton*

## SEMINAR NEWS

### SATURDAYS

**23 JULY AND 30 JULY 2005**

Our 2005 Seminar has the most exciting range of presentations ever! We're bringing you the latest research, as well as practical and valuable information for you to use in your practice or home.

Our very popular 'Keeping up with ADD' has helped people all over South Africa as well as in different parts of the world such as Australia, Hong Kong, and America, and yet these emails offer only a fraction of what you can learn from attending our 2005 Seminar! Much of what I have learnt for writing these articles has come from attending ADHASA Seminars ever since the first one held in 1991. And I'm still learning from them!

Come and see our new range of books on sale, supplements and sweets, toothpaste and tapes. See the range of essential fatty acids that will be on show, and for sale. Learn about the differences between them. Have a look at the latest edition of my book which is just being released – it sheds light on the omega 3 omega 6 debate!

Take this opportunity and come to our Seminar ... we have a few places left so book your seat as soon as possible. It's only R400 to attend the two days – and that includes lunch. If your child's school teacher doesn't really understand him (or her) then considering sponsoring the teacher! If you are lucky, she might be teaching your child in the next grade as well – especially if she attended our Seminar.

Don't forget that there are a whole series of lectures on Adult ADD. It seems that some of our ADD Adults

are concerned that they won't be able to sit still for a whole day ... get up and stand at the back of the hall for a while, or take a short break. Remember that attending this session can be just as valuable for the spouse or other members of the family!!!

ADD can precipitate even greater difficulties in communities like Soweto or areas around Brits where there is even less understanding of the condition or how to deal with it. If you or your company would like to sponsor someone from this community, please contact Sandy at 011-793-2079

This is the ideal opportunity for you to meet the experts who have a deep understanding of ADD; for you to understand how ADD may be affecting you or your family; to find the answers; and to have a great time!

See you there!!!

*Heather*

P.S. Please **RSVP**

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Did you know that you can change someone's life? A few hours of your time is all you need. Volunteer to become part of our dynamic team making a difference to ADD in our country.

Please contact Sandy at 888-7655 so that she can put you on the list for the next volunteer training course.

*"Dependent people need others to get what they want.*

*Independent people can get what they want through their own efforts.*

*Interdependent people combine their own efforts with the efforts of others to achieve their greatest success."*

Stephen Covey



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For a **COMPLIMENTARY**  
session (1,5 hours)  
to learn about how  
coaching can and will  
enhance your life  
phone Lori now on  
082-787-0262 to book  
an appointment!

This edition of "Keeping up with  
ADD" kindly put together for us

by Lori Lea;

Executive, Life and ADD Coach  
of Mind Focus

[www.MindFocus.co.za](http://www.MindFocus.co.za)