

New Sleep Maintenance Treatment Being Studied

A new drug for people who keep waking at night or wake up early and can't go back to sleep is being investigated by medical researchers.

Researchers at Sydney's Woolcock Institute of Medical Research will conduct clinical trials on the new drug, which is currently not available for medical prescription anywhere in the world.

Dr Anup Desai, Chief Investigator and Sleep Physician at the Woolcock Institute of Medical Research said, "Sleep maintenance insomnia can be very distressing to patients and can also lead to diminished work output, absenteeism and greater rates of accidents."

"The purpose of this study is to see if this new drug can improve people's sleeping problem."

"The drug acts on a particular brain chemical pathway (serotonin), which is thought to be important in regulating sleep."

Insomnia is the most common sleep disorder affecting about 30% of the population. The international study will recruit approximately 1800 people from Australia, Europe, North, Central and South America, Asia and South Africa to participate.

The study will last for one year with volunteers needing to visit the Woolcock 12 times during that period but not required to do overnight stays.

In addition to the study medication, study volunteers will receive medical advice on their sleep disorders, regular medical checks and reimbursement for travel costs.

To be eligible for the study volunteers need to be over 18 years of age and be able to get to sleep quickly but have trouble staying asleep through the night. To register an interest in participating in this study telephone 1800 828 717 or visit www.woolcock.org.au.