CBT-I Coach Overview

CBT-i Coach is a mobile phone app designed for use by people who are having difficulty sleeping and are participating in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia (CBT-i) treatment guided by a healthcare professional. CBT-i Coach was a collaborative effort between the Department of Veterans Affairs’ National Center for PTSD (NCPTSD), Stanford University Medical Center, and the Department of Defense’s National Center for Telehealth and Technology (T2).

Sleep difficulties are very common, especially among patients with depression, posttraumatic stress disorder, and physical pain. Treatment with pharmaceuticals is an option for people suffering from insomnia symptoms, but research suggests that CBT-I, a specific adaptation of cognitive behavioral therapy to insomnia, can also have a tremendous benefit, sometimes with better results than medication. With CBT-i, patients are taught to recognize how their thoughts and sleep-related behaviors affect their sleep patterns. Patients are provided with education about how sleep works. They are also guided on how to adjust both their sleep routines and their approach to sleep in order to enhance sleep quality and duration.

CBT-i Coach is based on the therapy manual Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia in Veterans by Rachel Manber, Ph.D., Leah Friedman, Ph.D., Colleen Carney, Ph.D., Jack Edinger, Ph.D., Dana Epstein, Ph.D., Patricia Haynes, Ph.D., Wilfred Pigeon, Ph.D. and Allison Siebern, Ph.D. CBT-i has been shown to be an efficacious treatment for insomnia in a number of clinical trials, including when it co-occurs with other medical and psychiatric conditions. The development team for this app included a team of expert sleep researchers and clinicians.

The features of CBT-i Coach include:

- An interactive sleep diary for convenient daily logging of sleep habits
- Automatic calculation of the sleep prescription, with options for the therapist to adjust based on clinical judgment and patient progress
- An assessment of insomnia severity using a validated measure (ISI), with a graph to view progress
- Comprehensive educational materials about sleep, healthy sleep habits, barriers to sleep, and CBT-i therapy
- Dynamic tools to improve sleep, including relaxation exercises and sleep hygiene recommendations (e.g. using a checklist for setting up the sleeping area)
- Customizable reminders to alert the user when to prepare for bed, when to go to sleep, when to get out of bed, to record sleep habits, and to take sleep assessments

This app is meant to be used in conjunction with face-to-face treatment for sleep difficulties with a healthcare professional. Some of the interventions can be used on its own with ease, but is not intended to replace therapy for those who need it.

CBT-i Coach is available for mobile Apple devices (iPhone, iPod touch, and iPad) and Android phones and tablets.

For more information about sleep and CBT-I, visit [http://www ptsd.va.gov](http://www ptsd.va.gov).