

## **Sleep Disorders and Mental Illness: Insomnia, Depression and Anxiety**

Natalie is a 21 year old woman studying architecture at university. She lives at home with her parents and younger brother.

She presents at her GP clinic, where she and her family have been attending since she was a child, complaining of difficulty sleeping at night.

The GP notes that Natalie appears more scruffy than usual, her affect is low and she looks drawn and tired.

Natalie describes how for the past couple of months she'll go to bed at her usual time and end up lying awake for up to two hours, often not actually falling asleep until around 2am. As a result she often sleeps through her alarm and misses her early morning university commitments.

She reports that her parents have encouraged her to attend the GP. Natalie has some major assessments due and she and her parents are worried about how she'll cope given what she has missed by over-sleeping and how she'll perform given how tired she always seems to feel.

Natalie states that her academic record is very good. She is enjoying her course and is doing well. She achieved well above average grades at school but remembers working hard for them and experiencing heightened anxiety whenever she had to give a presentation to the class and /or before exams.

Natalie shares that she occasionally has a social drink but states that she does not abuse alcohol nor has she ever taken nor would ever take recreational drugs.

Natalie was prescribed anti-depressants by her GP in response to depression she experienced following the unexpected death of her maternal grandmother a couple of years previously.

### ***Did you know...***

**MHPN has a series of webinars that cover a range of topical mental health issues.** Visit [www.mhpn.org.au](http://www.mhpn.org.au) to learn more.

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This is a de-identified vignette.