**Title:** Brief Behavioral Training Improves Insomnia

**Author:** By Robert Finn

**Summary:** Insomnia is highly prevalent among elderly patients, but a new study suggests that a brief behavioral treatment can significantly improve insomnia in this population.

**Key Points:**
- Insomnia is a common issue among elderly patients.
- In a study, 35 participants who were sleepy and not able to stay in bed unless they fell asleep were given four individually tailored instructions.
- The behavioral training was delivered by a master’s-level adult psychiatric and primary care nurse practitioner who had been trained in the technique.
- Participants were randomized to receive either the brief behavioral treatment or an “information-only control:” brochures published by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine on insomnia, sleep and aging, and sleep hygiene.

**Behavioral Training Session:**
- The behavioral training was delivered by a master’s-level adult psychiatric and primary care nurse practitioner who had been trained in the technique.
- Participants were randomized to receive either the brief behavioral treatment or an “information-only control:” brochures published by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine on insomnia, sleep and aging, and sleep hygiene.

**Results:**
- Twelve (71%) of the 17 participants who received the behavioral treatment met the study criteria for remission.
- In contrast, if it took them longer than 30 minutes to fall asleep or they awoke during the night for more than 30 minutes, they were instructed to decrease their time in bed by 15 minutes, and to maintain that new time in bed for 1 week.

**Conclusion:**
- The technique, a 45-minute training session plus a 30-minute booster 2 weeks later, could work in nursing homes, assisted living centers, and hospices.

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**Title:** More Data Show Positive Effects of Aspirin on Brain Matter

**Author:** By Amy Rothman Schonfeld

**Summary:** ATLANTA — Aspirin, even at low doses, appears to prevent age-related declines in gray and white matter integrity in brain regions that typically show the earliest neuropathological changes associated with Alzheimer’s disease, according to Lee Ryan, Ph.D., who is with the departments of psychology and neuroscience of the University of Arizona at Tucson.

**Key Points:**
- Dr. Ryan presented her findings on the impact of aspirin on brain function at the annual meeting of the Society for Neuroscience in Tucson.
- Most of the people in this group took the equivalent of one baby aspirin a day (81 mg) for up to 15 years.
- Diffusion-weighted (DW) MRI scans were carried out on a 3-T scanner using a radial fast spin-echo method.

**Results:**
- DW-MRI is thought to be “exquisitely” sensitive to the presence of inflammation and other neuropathologic processes in white and gray matter, Dr. Ryan said.
- The investigator analyzed four brain regions of interest: the medial temporal lobe and adjacent hippocampal white matter, and the posterior cingulate and adjacent white matter in the splenium.
- With DW-MRI, lower apparent diffusion coefficient (ADC) values in gray matter and higher fractional anisotropy (FA) values in white matter, compared with controls, are thought to reflect preservation of brain integrity.

**Conclusion:**
- Dr. Ryan said that aspirin users had significantly lower hippocampal mean ADC values and higher mean FA values in the adjacent white matter region than did controls.
- Colored boxes represent areas assessed using diffusion-weighted MRI scans to determine the preservation of brain integrity in one subject. The DW-MRI scans were carried out on a 3-T scanner using a radial fast spin-echo method.