



## Role of Sleep in Emotional and Physical Well-Being

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### Editorial

Sleep is vital for healthy functioning. While Sleep problems and disorders can cause or exacerbate psychiatric and medical problems, sleep and treatment of sleep disorders can ameliorate and have a preventive role in emotional and physical well-being.

#### Role of sleep in neuropsychiatric disorders

There is a bi-directional relationship between sleep and emotional well-being. Sleep problems can be a symptom of psychiatric disorders. They can also cause or worsen various neuropsychiatric disorders. Insufficient sleep can result in impaired attention, alertness, concentration, reasoning, and problem solving. Lack of sleep can impede productivity and efficiency during waking hours. Sleep is also important for learning and memory consolidation [1]. Insomnia can be a presenting symptom of depression, and persons with chronic insomnia are at a higher risk for subsequent development of depression. Persistent insomnia is a risk factor for relapse of depressive disorder, substance use abuse, bipolar disorder, and psychotic disorders. Insomnia is also a risk factor for suicide, and treatment of insomnia decreases that risk [2,3].

Sleep problems and disorders are commonly seen in patients with various anxiety disorders. Patients with obstructive sleep apnea can have panic disorder and nocturnal panic symptoms. Treatment of insomnia and sleep disorders improves the outcome of anxiety disorders [4].

Patients with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) are more susceptible to sleep disruption resulting from poor sleep habits and other disorders, and adequate sleep is important in patients with ADHD [5,6].

Sleep problems and disorders could mimic a presentation of a psychiatric disorder. Sleep apnea can lead to symptoms of fatigue and poor energy and resemble symptoms of untreated depressive disorder. Insomnia can be a symptom, cause, or associated disorder in patients with depression and anxiety disorders. Untreated sleep disorder could also lead to incomplete resolution of depressive symptoms and possibly treatment resistance [7].

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Poor sleep can also lead to decreased quality of life, impaired physical functioning and increased memory impairments in older adults. Sleep problems like insomnia and sleep apnea increase risk of stroke and dementia. Treatment of sleep apnea seems to slow the memory decline in patients with dementia and improve their functioning [8].

#### Role of sleep in prevention of medical disorders

While as untreated sleep disorders and chronic sleep deprivation can increase the risk of various medical disorders like cardiovascular disease, hypertension, stroke, diabetes and obesity, treatment of sleep disorders can have a role in prevention of these medical problems [8].

This underscores the need for evaluation and treatment of sleep problems. Hypertension, coronary artery disease, arrhythmias and heart failure are seen co-morbid with obstructive sleep apnea. There is also high prevalence of obstructive sleep apnea in patients with atrial fibrillation. Patients with atrial fibrillation and obstructive sleep apnea are more likely to stay in normal sinus rhythm after cardio version if their sleep apnea is treated [9]. Use of CPAP has been shown to improve systolic function, reduces Left ventricular end-systolic diameter, and improves quality of life in heart failure patients.

Untreated Sleep apnea leads to insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes. Treatment of sleep apnea seems to have beneficial effects in improving glycemic control in patients with type 2 diabetes [10].

Sleep problems like insomnia have been invoked in causation of weight gain. Sleep disorders and sleep problems can exacerbate other medical problems like Gastro Esophageal Reflux Disorder (GERD) and associated heart burn, asthma. Sleep problems can exacerbate pain symptoms

in various pain disorders and improving sleep and treating sleep disorders can decrease pain symptoms in these patients.

Sleep problems can also lead to absenteeism and reduced quality of life. Evaluation and treatment of sleep problems and sleep disorders can have an additive beneficial effect in overall health of patients with various medical problems and a preventive role. Promoting optimal sleep and healthy sleep habits along with screening and treatment of sleep disorders can have an important role in emotional and physical well-being.

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