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Hypersomnia

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Hypersomnia is a sleep disorder that, as you can infer, is the opposite side of insomnia, and constitutes in an excess of sleep, including during inappropriate times, such as when working or driving.

Although people with hypersomnia may sleep much longer during the night, than what is common for most, as well as take naps during the day, they still feel tired and drowsy in their waking hours, and have a craving for sleep. So, even though they manifest in polar ways, insomnia and hypersomnia lead to the similar health issues and functional challenges.

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Main Symptoms

The leading characteristics of this sleep disorder are:

- Daytime sleepiness and drowsiness
- Falling asleep while performing other activities, even when working, driving, social gatherings, etc.
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Sluggish speech

- Disorientation
- Loss of appetite
- Other cognitive impairments, such as slowed down thinking or memory problems
- Symptoms usually start in late adolescence or young adulthood

For a diagnosis to be made, it is important that the symptoms should be recurrent, for at least three consecutive months.

What Causes Hypersomnia?

According to the Hypersomnia Foundation, this sleep disorder is caused by the brain's overproduction of a small molecule, whose composition is not yet known, yet it is believed that this compound interacts with neurotransmitters in the central nervous system in a way, that causes hypersomnia. The effect is that of a sedative-hypnotic medication. However, not much has yet been discovered about the disorder and its neurological roots.

Diagnosis of Hypersomnia

Hypersomnia is not a very common sleep disorder. However, it can be tormenting to those who struggle with it, as well as for their loved ones. Furthermore, it is important to know how hypersomnia manifests because it may be a warning sign of another medical problem. For instance, it may be a symptom of sleep apnea or a dysfunction in the central nervous system. Illnesses, such as multiple sclerosis and brain trauma have been related to this particular sleep problem as well.

As is the case with every sleep disorder, medical issues are not the only cause of hypersomnia. Substance abuse and mental health problems – specifically depression – are believed to be important reasons behind it too.

Since hypersomnia can be closely related to many other health issues, it requires several tests to be diagnosed, and it is strongly recommended that you go to a sleep specialist, if you have any suspicion that you or a loved one may be struggling with hypersomnia. There is a set of specific examinations, which can be performed, to determine whether the amount of sleep you crave is objectively correspondent to hypersomnia.

Treatment

The treatment is usually a combination of medication (generally, stimulants or antidepressants), as well as behavioral changes. Remember that changes in your thought

patterns and behavioral patterns is something that can impact every sleep disorder.

From keeping a sleeping diary to improving daytime and nighttime habits, when it comes to restorative sleep, you need to take charge and implement some changes that allow your body and mind to rest. That is the core of every sleep disorder: helping the unrested mind and body to recover.

What Now?

So now that you've seen the great contrast that can exist between sleep disorder, from insomnia to hypersomnia, we'll take a quick look at some of the other possibilities that may be keeping you from the healthy sleep you so desire.

The Importance of Learning, Before Applying

However, before we move on, here's a quick disclaimer: we know that merely reading about symptoms might make you feel anxious, but this information is worth learning and remembering. After all, you can't fight an enemy you don't see. This information will allow you to understand how sleep disorders manifest, and it will also come in handy when you feel defeated at night (or day).

Please remember that you're not alone, and you're already learning about sleep disorders so you can deal with them in the best way for you.

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