

Fact Sheet

Sleep

Parkinson's Disease & Movement Disorders Center

Sleep difficulties affect about 60-90% of PD patients such as disturbed overnight sleep or daytime sleepiness. Studies confirmed that disturbed sleep has negative consequences on the overall quality of life. It is important that patients discuss their sleep complaints with their physician. Treatment may involve changes in medications.

The most common sleep disorders among PD patients are:

- Sleep maintenance insomnia such as fragmented overnight sleep.
- REM sleep behavior disorder (RBD) patients tend to act out their dreams (e.g., loud vocalizations and motor behaviors).
- Sleep apnea syndrome: This is a condition associated with snoring and breathing pauses, and numerous micro-awakenings during night.
- Daytime sleepiness: Excessive daytime sleepiness may result in a sudden onset of sleep that may occur while driving.

Major contributors to sleep problems among PD population are: medication side effects, re-emergence of motor symptoms throughout the night, co-existent primary sleep disorders, and PD progression itself.

Appropriate **sleep hygiene** assists in a good overnight sleep.

- Get regular exercise each day.
- A warm drink may help you relax.
- Keep a consistent and regular time out of bed 7 days a week.
- Keep clock face turned away from you if you wake up a night.
- Do not eat or drink heavily for 3 hours before bedtime. And, avoid heavy meals and spices in the evening.
- Keep your room dark, quiet, well-ventilated, and at a comfortable temperature throughout the night.
- Use a bedtime ritual e.g. reading before lights-out.
- If you wake at night, do not try too hard to sleep; instead, concentrate on relaxing.
- Be sure mattress is not too soft or too firm, and pillow is right height and firmness.
- Use bedroom only for sleep; do not work or do other activities that lead to prolonged arousal.
- If possible, make arrangement for night-time (sleep-time) care-giving activities (for children, others, pets).

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