Goodnight Soon? Insomnia in a Medically Complex Toddler: A Multidisciplinary Approach

Elizabeth Super, MD; Associate Professor, Division of Pediatric Pulmonary & Sleep Medicine

David Wagner, PhD, Associate Professor, Psychology





https://tubiefriends.com/main/who-we-help/

OBJECTIVES

1

Obtain full sleep history in medically complex patient.

2

Appreciate medical comorbidities that contribute to sleep disruption.

3

Review off label medications that may be helpful for insomnia 4

Recognize systemic factors within families that impact sleep 5

Identify potential behavioral interventions to address sleep challenges.

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Sleep History: General Fx

Medical, developmental, mental health

Current services

Home situation

School/daycare situation

General behavior

Physical activity

Mood + Anxiety/fears



Sleep Medicine

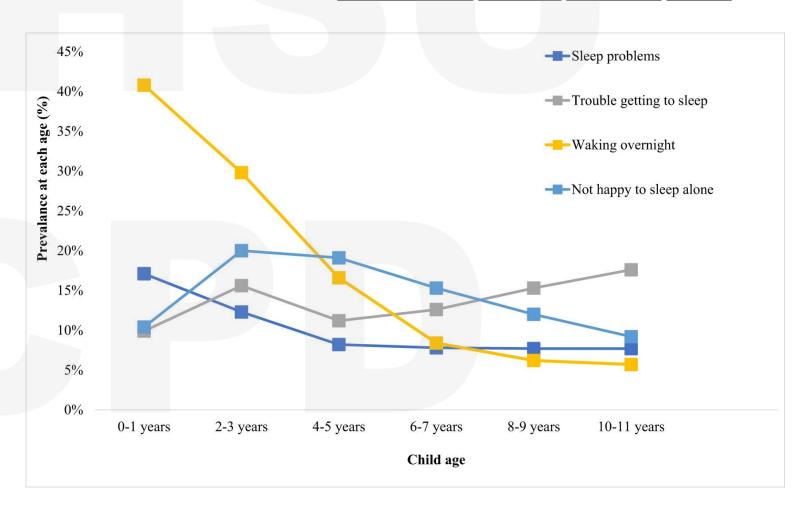
Volume 63, November 2019, Pages 5-8



ef Communication

Child sleep behaviors and sleep problems from infancy to school-age

Ariel A. Williamson $a b \overset{\circ}{\sim} \boxtimes$, Jodi A. Mindell $b \overset{\circ}{\sim}$, Harriet Hiscock $d \overset{\circ}{\circ}$, Jon Quach $g \overset{\circ}{\wedge}$



Sleep History: Daytime Sleep

- Morning: Wake time and readiness
- Falling asleep in unexpected situations?
- Fatigue
- Nap: frequency, timing, and duration
- Time and activities in bed awake
- Other: headaches, irritability...

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

The Effects of Napping on Cognitive Function in Preschoolers

Lam, Janet C. MD*; Mahone, E. Mark PhD^{†‡}; Mason, Thornton B.A. MD, PhD[§]; Scharf, Steven M. MD, PhD[¶]

Author Information⊙

Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics 32(2):p 90-97, February 2011. | DOI: 10.1097/DBP.0b013e318207ecc7

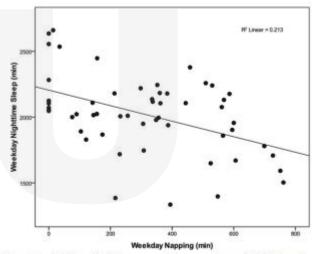


Figure 1. Relationship between weekday napping and nighttime sleep.

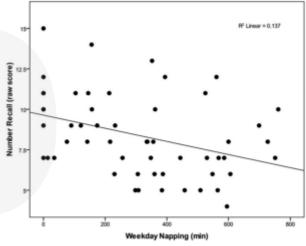


Figure 2. Association between daytime napping and auditory attention (Number Recall).

Sleep History: Night sleep

- Bedroom environment
- Routine timing, activities, and duration
- Time in bed + Sleep onset
- Caregiver observations
- Night wakings: timing, duration
- Continence
- Other: nightmares, night terrors, other parasomnias
- Weekends?



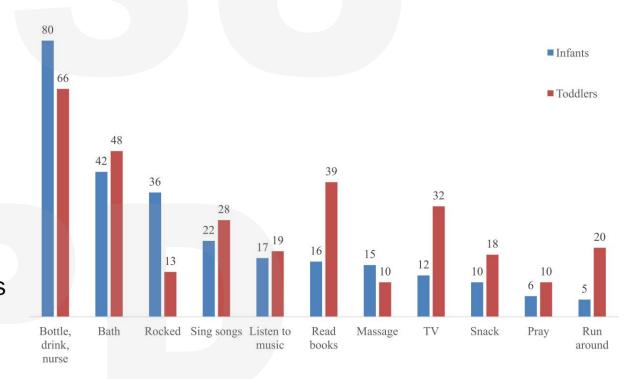
Sleep Medicine Reviews Volume 40, August 2018, Pages 93-108



neoretical Review

Benefits of a bedtime routine in young children: Sleep, development, and beyond

Jodi A. Mindell ^{a b} 🌣 🖾 , Ariel A. Williamson ^{b c}



Sleep Tracking

Indicaciones: Llene cada mañana al despertar. No hay problema si usa horas aproximadas.

EJEMPLO: Se va a la cama a las 7:30 p.m.; se duerme a las 8 p.m. Se despierta por 15 minutos llamando al cuidador/a. Se despierta a las 6 a.m. Se toma una siesta de 11 a.m. a 12 p.m.



7p 8p 9p 10p 11p 12a 1a 2a 3a 4a 5a 6a 7a 8a 9a 10a 11a 12p 1p 2p 3p 4p 5p Notas

Sleep Questionnaires



Pediatric sleep health: It matters, and so does how we define it*

Lisa J. Meltzer a,*, Ariel A. Williamson b, c, Jodi A. Mindell b, d

Considerations

- Age
- Time
- Domains
- Reporter

Table 3Examples of subjective pediatric questionnaires and the domains of sleep health measured.

Subjective Measures	Satisfaction	Alertness/Sleepiness	Timing	Efficiency	Duration	Behaviors	Age	Items	Reporter
Children's Sleep Habits Questionnaire [118]	/	/	/	/	/	/	2-10 yrs	33/45	Parent
Children's Report of Sleep Patterns [119-121]	✓	✓	/	/	/	/	8-18 yrs	60	Self
School Sleep Habits Survey [122]	/	✓	✓	1	/	/	13-19 yrs	45	Self
Brief Infant Sleep Questionnaire [123, 124]	/		/	/	✓	/	0-3 yrs	$13/25^{a}$	Parent
BEARS [113]		/	/		✓	/	2-18 yrs	7-8	Parent/Self
PROMIS Pediatric Sleep Disturbance [168]	/						8-18 yrs	4/8/15	Self
							5-18 yrs	4/8/15	Parent-proxy
Sleep Disturbance Scale for Children [114]		✓			✓		6-15 yrs	27	Parent
Modified Epworth Sleepiness Scale [169]/Epworth		✓					12-18 yrs	8	Self
Sleepiness Scale for Children and							2-18 yrs	8	Parent-proxy
Adolescents [170]									
Pediatric Sleep Questionnaire [171]		✓					2-18 yrs	22	Parent
Pediatric Daytime Sleepiness Scale [172]		✓					11-15 yrs	8	Self
PROMIS Pediatric Sleep Related Impairment [168]		✓					8-18 yrs	4/8/15	Self
							5-18 yrs	4/8/15	Parent-proxy
Morningness-Eveningness Questionnaire for Children [173]			1				11-12 yrs	10	Self

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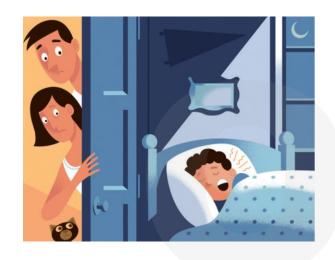
(3)

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Obstructive Sleep Apnea

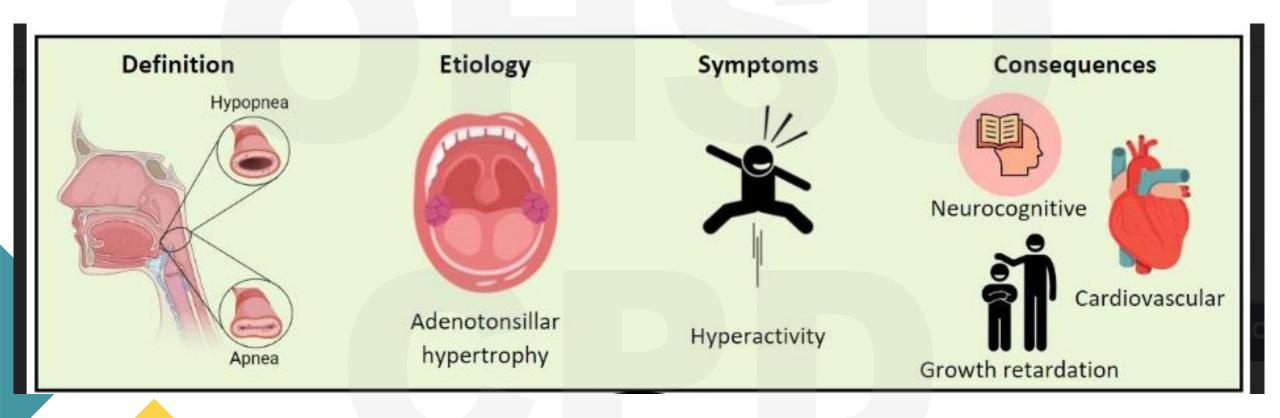
Disorder of breathing during sleep that causes:

Prolonged partial or complete upper airway obstruction.

Disrupts gas exchange and sleep patterns.



OBSTRUCTIVE SLEEP APNEA



Biomedicines 2023, 11, 1708.

https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37371803/



Sleep, especially deep NREM Sleep increases interictal epileptiform activity.

Sleep increases certain seizure types and the rate of generalization of partial seizures.

Sleep disorders, particularly sleep apnea, exacerbate seizures.

Seizures, in turn, can disrupt sleep structure, particularly rapid-eye-movement sleep.

CLINICAL REVIEW

Sleep disruption in children and adolescents with epilepsy: A systematic review and meta-analysis



Alice A. Winsor ^{a, b, *}, Caroline Richards ^b, Stacey Bissell ^b, Stefano Seri ^c, Ashley Liew ^d, Andrew P. Bagshaw ^{a, b}

- a Centre for Human Brain Health, University of Birmingham, UK
- ^b School of Psychology, University of Birmingham, UK
- c Birmingham Children's Hospital, Birmingham Women's and Children's Hospital NHS Foundation, UK
- d Evelina London Children's Hospital, South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, University of Warwic

Sleep Medicine Reviews 57 (2021) 101416

- Relative to healthy children, children with Epilepsy:
 - Reduced sleep time, sleeping on average 34 mins less
 - More night waking, parasomnias and sleep disordered breathing
 - Children with drug resistant epilepsy appear to be most vulnerable to sleep disturbances, although the relative contribution of antiepileptic medications or recurrent seizures is not clear.

Atopic Dermatitis

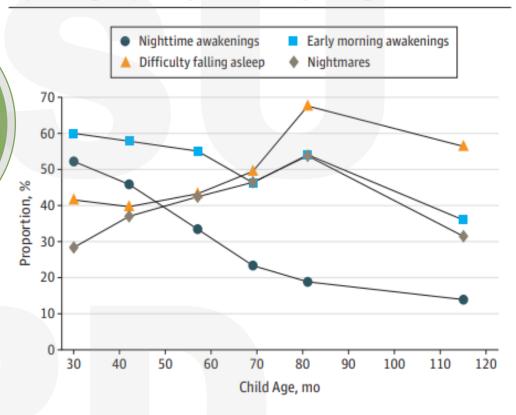
Pruritis often worst at night: SCRATCHING

Difficulty falling asleep

Disruption in ongoing sleep



Figure 2. Proportion of Children With Active Atopic Dermatitis Experiencing Sleep-Quality Disturbances by Child Age



Proportion of children with active atopic dermatitis reporting each of the 4 sleep-quality disturbances based on cross-sectional data at different child ages.

JAMA Pediatrics | Original Investigation

Association of Atopic Dermatitis With Sleep Quality in Children

Faustine D. Ramirez, BA; Shelley Chen, BS; Sinéad M. Langan, FRCP, MSc, PhD; Aric A. Prather, PhD; Charles E. McCulloch, PhD; Sharon A. Kidd, MPH, PhD; Michael D. Cabana, MD, MPH; Mary-Margaret Chren, MD; Katrina Abuabara, MD, MA, MSCE

JAMA Pediatr. 2019;173(5):e190025. doi:10.1001/jamapediatrics.2019.0025 Published online March 4, 2019.



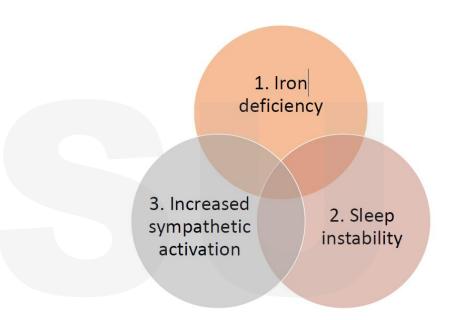
Longitudinal cohort from 1990 to 2008: 4938 children (35.3%) with Atopic Dermatitis:

Children with active Atopic Dermatitis:

More likely to report worse sleep quality at all time points, with a nearly 50% higher odds of experiencing more sleep-quality disturbances.

Children with more severe active disease and with comorbid asthma or allergic rhinitis had worse sleep quality.

RESTLESS SLEEP



- Restless sleep is a frequent parental concern.
- Seen more commonly in patients with ADHD, Atopic Dermatitis, Iron Deficiency Anemia.

RESTLESS SLEEP DISORDER

1. Iron deficiency

3. Increased sympathetic activation

2. Sleep instability

Differential Diagnosis

	RSD	RLS	PLMD
Clinical presentation	Restless sleep Daytime impairment	Urge to move legs Sleep-onset insomnia Daytime impairment	Periodic leg movements of sleep Daytime impairment
Diagnosis	Clinical + PSG	Clinical	Clinical + PSG
PSG findings	Body movement index > 5 per hour	May or may not have elevated PLMI	PLMI > 5
Pathophysiology	Sleep instability Iron deficiency Sympathetic activation	Dopamine dysfunction Iron deficiency	Unknown (probably shared

Abbreviations: PLMI, PLMS index; PSG, polysomnogram; RLS, restless legs syndrome; RSD, restless sleep disorder.

Diagnosis is based on clinical history and objective findings on Sleep Study.

Case Example





21 month old male with Dravet Syndrome with disrupted sleep, mouth breathing, choking and gasping during sleep.

Worsening sleep after Clobazam dose increased. Now weaning Clobazam, Levetiracetam and starting Flenfluramine.

Started Melatonin 1 mg, now waking less frequently.

Sleep study at 22 months:

Negative for obstructive sleep apnea, normal oxygen and C02 levels.

Abnormal background on EEG with diffuse slowing and superimposed beta activity (beta activity can be seen due to medication effect such as benzodiazepines or barbiturates. Diffuse slowing is suggestive of encephalopathy of various etiologies).

Increased Periodic Limb Movements, majority not associated with arousal from sleep.

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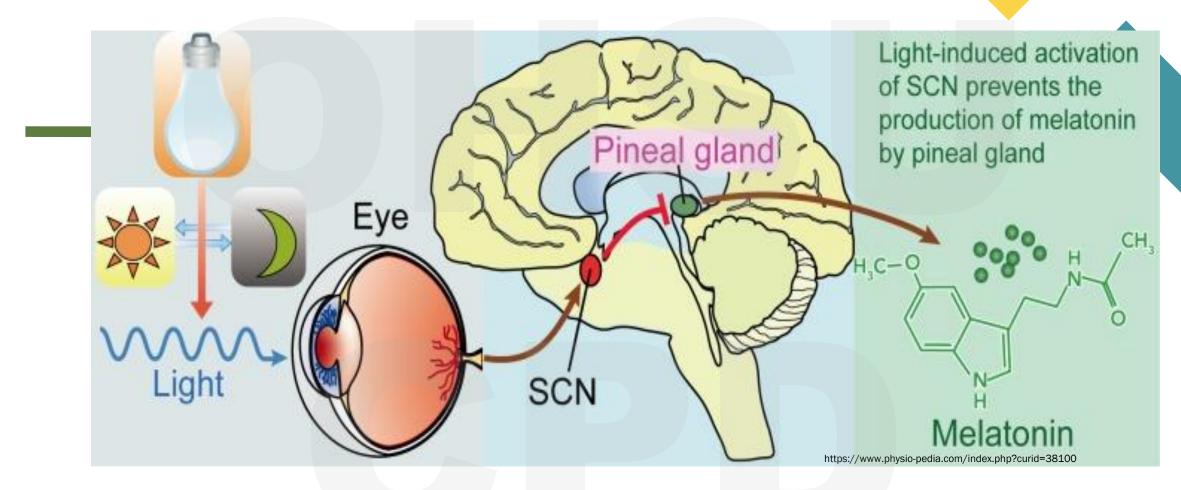
4

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- •DISCUSSION OF OFF-LABEL MEDICATIONS.
- •THERE ARE NO FDA APPROVED MEDICATIONS FOR PEDIATRIC INSOMNIA.

MELATONIN



Production and secretion begin in the evening and peak during the night between 2:00 and 4:00 AM Melatonin production becomes regular at **3 months** of age.

Exogenous Melatonin does not affect sleep architecture (Bruni et al., 2015).

MELATONIN INGESTIONS

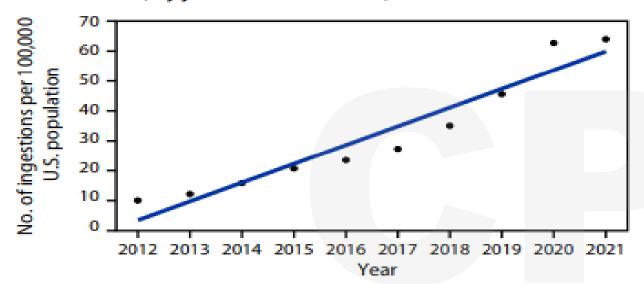


Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report

Pediatric Melatonin Ingestions — United States, 2012–2021

Karima Lelak, MD1; Varun Vohra, PharmD2; Mark I. Neuman, MD3; Michael S. Toce, MD3; Usha Sethuraman, MD1.4

FIGURE 1. Rate* of pediatric[†] melatonin ingestions reported to poison control centers, by year[§] — United States, 2012–2021



^{*} Ingestions per 100,000 population, based on U.S. Census Bureau Annual Estimate.

 260,435 pediatric melatonin ingestions were reported to National Poison Data System from 2012-2021.

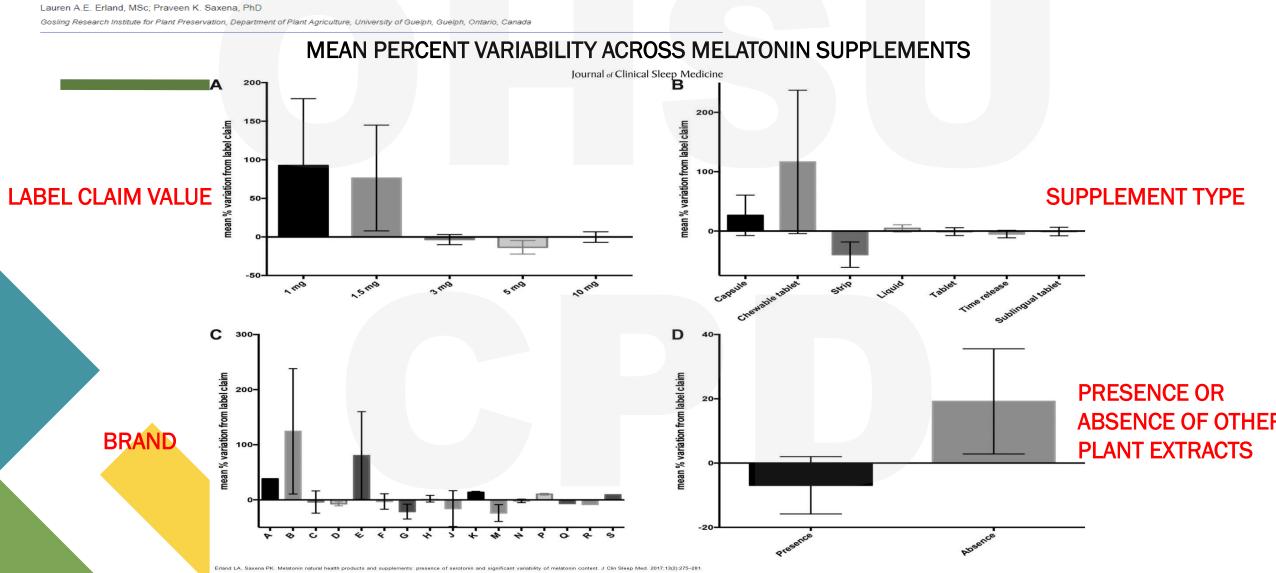
4.9% of all pediatric ingestions in 2021 compared with 0.6% in 2012.

[†] Aged ≤ 19 years.

[§] Linear trend, p<0.001.</p>

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATIONS

Melatonin Natural Health Products and Supplements: Presence of Serotonin and Significant Variability of Melatonin Content



MELATONIN EVIDENCE:

Dose 1–10 mg given 30–60 min before bedtime alone or in combination with cognitive-behavioral therapy is effective in insomnia of children with:

Autism Spectrum Disorder (Cortesi, Giannotti, Sebastiani, Panunzi, & Valente, 2012; Goldman et al., 2014)

Angelman syndrome (Andersen, Kaczmarska, McGrew, & Malow, 2008; Braam, Didden, Smits, & Curfs, 2008)

Rett syndrome (McArthur & Budden, 1998)

ADHD, but did not improve core symptoms (Cortese et al., 2013); RCT showed efficacy in reducing sleep latency in ADHD children with sleep onset delay caused by methylphenidate (Mohammadi et al., 2012)

Smith-Magenis syndrome (De Leersnyder et al., 2001)

MELATONIN EVIDENCE:

- Prolonged release melatonin improved night wakings in neurodevelopmental conditions.⁴⁻⁵
- Prolonged release melatonin may be more efficacious for night wakings given its longer duration of action and showed efficacy in an open label trial⁶ and in randomized clinical trials⁷⁻⁸
- Minimal adverse effects and pubertal development was not delayed in children followed over 2 years.
- Previous reports of poor seizure control and poor asthma control have not been confirmed.



MELATONIN DOSING

- · Melatonin 3 mg Tablets NatureMade
- Melatonin 5 mg Tablets NatureMade
- Melatonin 5 mg Fast Dissolve Tablets Natrol

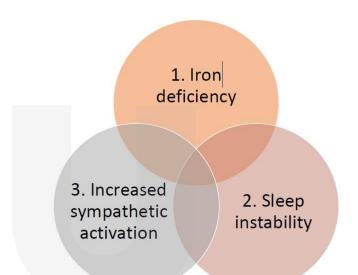
https://www.qualitysupplements.org/usp_verified_products?search_api_fulltext=melaton

- 30 minutes prior to sleep for hypnotic effect
- Maximum dose: <40 kg: 3 mg
- >40 mg 5 mg
- Side effects: Headaches, confusion, dizziness, cough, and rashes have been reported, but these common symptoms are likely to be coincidental or caused by impurities in the unregulated formulations of melatonin. Most commonly reported is vivid dreams.

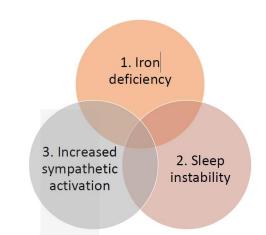
Iron Supplementation

- Goal Ferritin above 50.
- Oral and IV Iron has shown clinical improvement with fewer movement and less sleepiness.
- Oral iron 3 mg elemental iron/kg/day or 65mg/day for three months. Can dose every other day.
- Optimize absorption with concurrent vitamin C, avoid dairy/antacids.

DelRosso et al Sleep Med Clin 16 (2021) 381–387 DelRossoL et al Sleep Medicine 87 (2021) 114-118



Iron Supplementation



- Unpleasant taste, patients with poor absorption
- Many preparations available that may be better tolerated: (Nova Ferrum liquid, Celebrate Iron Chewables, Lifeable Iron Gummies).
- Constipation, GI upset, nausea, teeth staining with liquid.
- Repeat ferritin 3 months after supplementation.

HYDROXYZINE

- First generation anti-histamine
- Rapidly absorbed and have rapid onset of action.
- •Effects on sleep architecture appear to be minimal.
- Consider use in children with comorbid atopic dermatitis for disturbed sleep due to itch.

HYDROXYZINE

- Half life: 6-24 hours
- Not habit forming
- Tolerance increases with increased use
- Paradoxical reactions (~10%)

CLONIDINE

Centrally-acting alpha-2 adrenergic agonist that inhibits sympathetic outflow, and also has sedative effects.

- Autism Spectrum Disorder: open-label study of 17 children (ages 4-16 years) prescribed clonidine for sleep onset insomnia or night wakings (0.05 to 0.1 mg). All with sleep onset delay improved and 16/17 with night wakings improved.¹
- In neurodevelopmental disorders, 6 children (ages 4-15 years) had fewer night wakings and longer sleep duration with 0.15-0.225 mg/daily (2 divided doses).²
- Retrospective review of 62 children and young adults (ages 6-24 years) showed decrease in Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI) scores, especially sleep latency and subjective sleep quality. Dose not specified.³

CLONIDINE

- Immediate release: rapidly absorbed
- Onset of action within one hour and peak effects 2-4 hours
- Mid-sleep awakening may occur as blood levels drop during the night.
- Narrow therapeutic index: risk for overdose
- Side effects: pallor, tachycardia, hypotension, irritability, dizziness, nausea, and increased night wakings. Rebound hypertension on withdrawal. Blood pressure monitoring after starting and every three months.

Case Example



Returned 10 months later:

Takes 2 mg melatonin around 10-10:30 pm.



Falling asleep quickly, but waking between 1:30-3:30 am, falls back to sleep at 7 am. Shares bed with parents.

Falls asleep mostly on his own but wakes up screaming, climbing around in bed.

Is itchy at night.

Case Example





Goal bedtime: 8:30 pm

Increase Melatonin to 3 mg

Due to comorbid eczema: trial of hydroxyzine and referral to Dermatology

Continue supplemental iron; Ferritin with next lab draw.

Referral to Behavioral Sleep Psychology

Goal to minimize middle the night reinforcement if patient is awake.

Referral to CDRC Equipment Clinic for safety sleeper bed.

Follow up in 8 weeks.

Home Medical Beds



"Our beds offer unparalleled safety features that prevent elopement and entrapment, such as opening only from the outside and a coverlet sheet. Crafted with care, each bed model enhances sleep for both families and their loved ones."

Home Medical Beds



- More recent requests due to direct marketing through social media
- Cubby Beds, Sleep Safe, Beds by George
- Doernbecher CDRC Equipment Clinic (referrals for wheelchairs, mobility equipment
- Physical Therapy Equipment Evaluation considered letter of medical necessity
- Can take at least three months, and can be very difficult to be approved by insurance

Case Example Follow Up





Two Months Later:

Marked improvement in sleep onset and sleep consolidation with hydroxyzine and melatonin.

One nap per day
ABA therapy starting shortly
Upcoming CDRC Equipment Clinic Appointment
Upcoming Behavioral Sleep Medicine appointment

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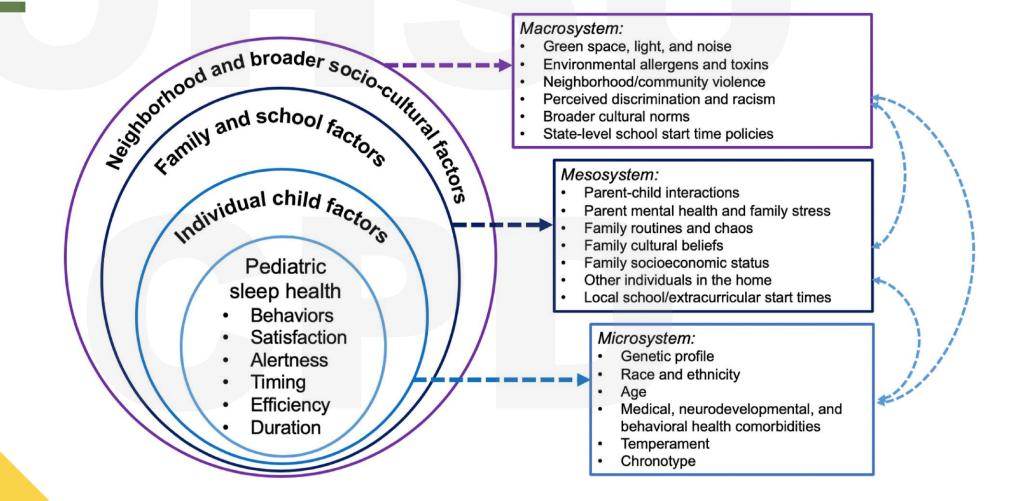
Identify potential behavioral interventions to address sleep challenges.

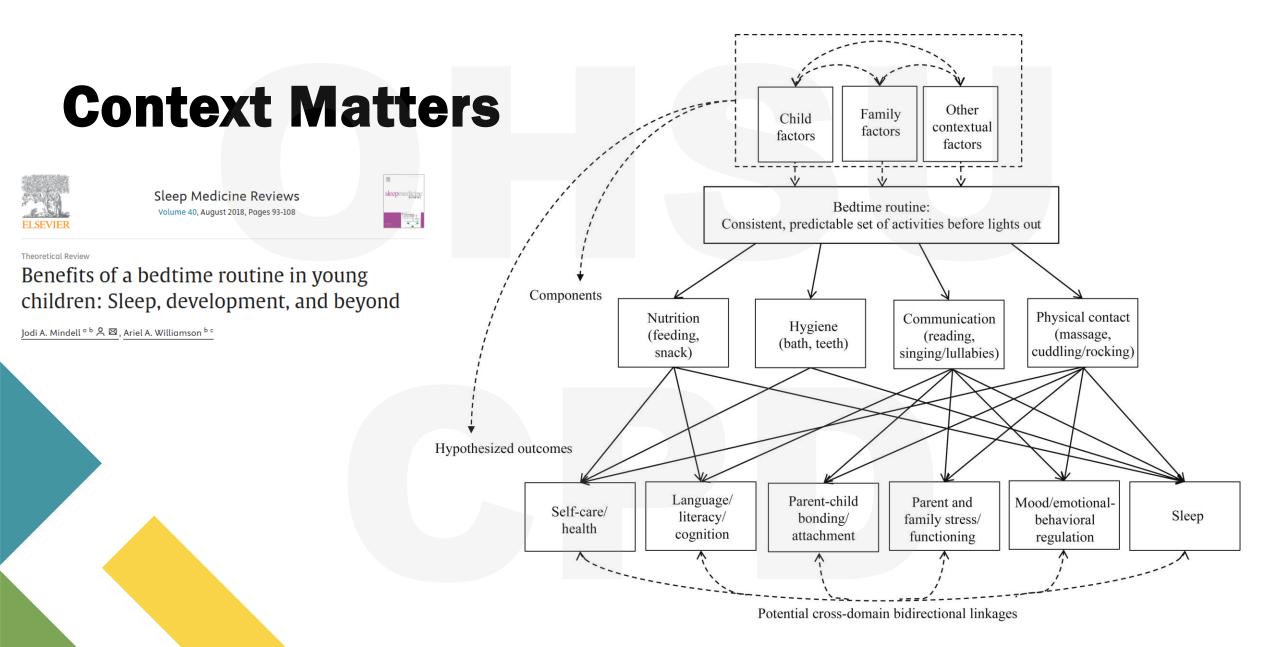
Socioecological framework

inical Review

Pediatric sleep health: It matters, and so does how we define it ☆

Lisa J. Meltzer ^a [△] ☑ , Ariel A. Williamson ^{b c}, Jodi A. Mindell ^{b d}







Sleep Medicine

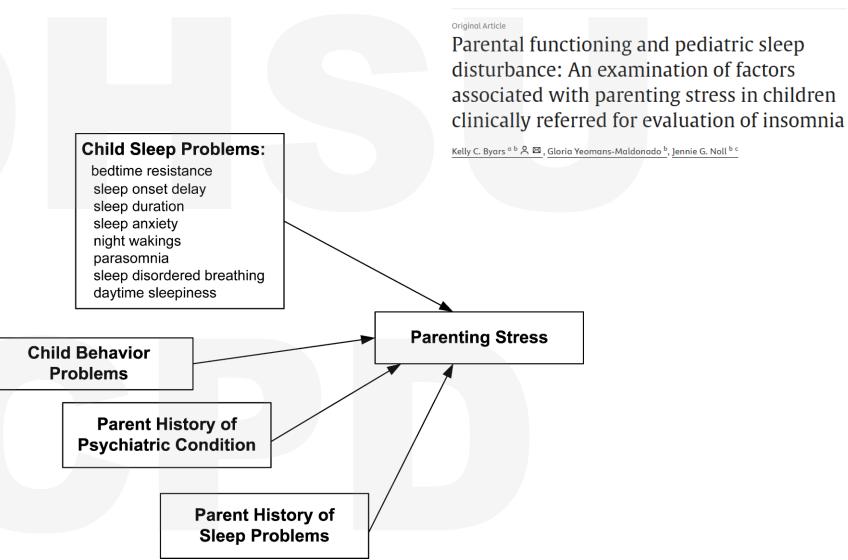
Volume 12, Issue 9, October 2011, Pages 898-905



Take Home Message

Consider

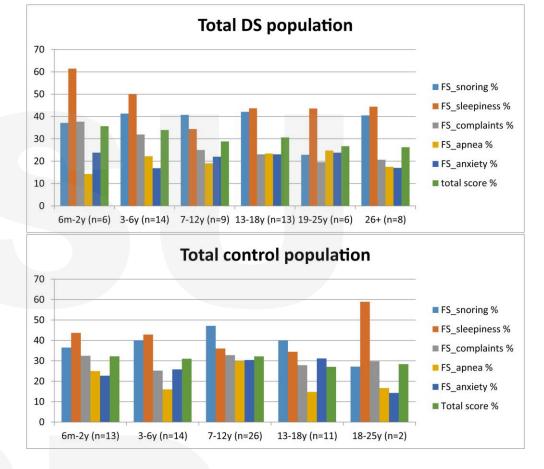
- Cultural factors
- SES
- Parent Stress
- Family roles/beliefs
- Social support
- Readiness



Case Example



- Family goals:
 - Reduce waking and duration
 - Transfer to own bed/room
- Factors to consider
 - Family structure: other children, employment (late shift)
 - Existing services
 - Daytime activity
 - Anxiety
 - Safety concerns





European Journal of Paediatric Neurology
Volume 23, Issue 1, January 2019, Pages 61-69



Original articl

More daytime sleepiness and worse quality of sleep in patients with Dravet Syndrome compared to other epilepsy patients

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Behavioral Interventions

Typical challenges:

- Delayed sleep onset
- Leaving bedroom
- Nighttime waking
- Requires caregiver present

Considerations:

- Age
- Developmental level
- Family structure
- Daytime behavior



REVIEW PAPER 🙃 Full Access

Interventions to control children's screen use and their effect on sleep: A systematic review and meta-analysis

Katie B. Martin X. Jana M. Bednarz, Edoardo C. Aromataris



Volume 30, Issue 3 June 2021 e13130

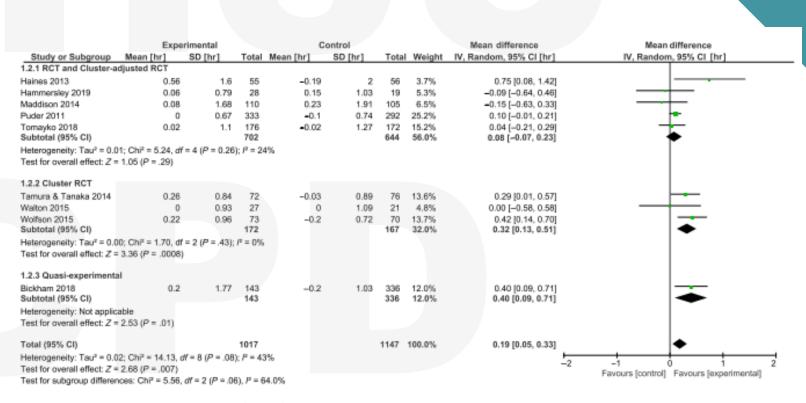


FIGURE 3 Increase in sleep duration (hr/day) from baseline following intervention, by study design

Behavioral Interventions: Bedtime Routine

- <u>Issue</u>: Not falling asleep consistently
- Benefits: Pattern of behaviors child will learn to connect with sleep
- Considerations:
 - All should take place outside of bed
 - Should end close to typical sleep onset

- Important components (Mindell & Williamson, 2018)
 - Same order each night
 - Several adaptive activities
 - + parent-child interaction
 - Avoid maladaptive components
 - Consider family factors

Behavioral Interventions: Faded Bedtime Routine

Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders (2018) 48:1002–1019 https://doi.org/10.1007/s10803-017-3398-4

S.I.: PARENTING CHILDREN WITH ASD



Parent-Implemented Bedtime Fading and Positive Routines for Children with Autism Spectrum Disorders

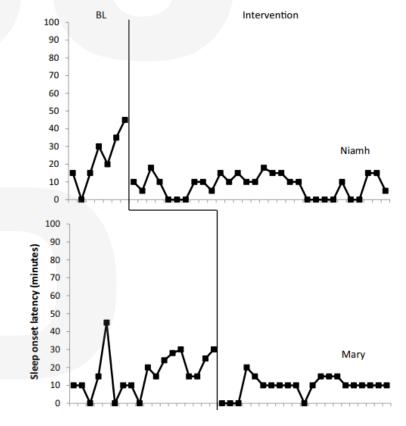
Emma Delemere 1 · Katerina Dounavi 10

- <u>Issue</u>: Large gap between routine and sleep onset
- Benefits:
 - Routine = sleep onset
 - Less time in bed/lights out awake
- Steps:
 - Temporarily push routine and bedtime later
 - Keep same wake/nap time
 - Goal = fall asleep within 15-30 minutes
 - Gradually move toward desired sleep onset

Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders (2018) 48:1002-1019

1009

Fig. 1 Sleep onset latency in minutes across nights for bedtime fading



Treating sleep onset associations and night wakings

"Whatever is needed to fall asleep is needed to get back to sleep after normal night wakings, which happen 2-6 times per night!"

Consider

Start with a bedtime routine: Move sleep onset item (feeding, TV) to beginning of routine and/or stabilize sleep onset association

Choose where and how to start (gradually) removing or reducing sleep onset association (modified vs. unmodified extinction)

Address night awakenings once child can consistently fall asleep on their own at bedtime

Add differential reinforcement!
Address fears!

bedtime

fading!

Manage expectations!



Positive reinforcement & planned ignoring

	Brush your teeth	Use the potty	Wash your hands / Take a bath	Read a	Lights out	Stay in bed unti
Monday		8	7	010	3	
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						
Sunday						

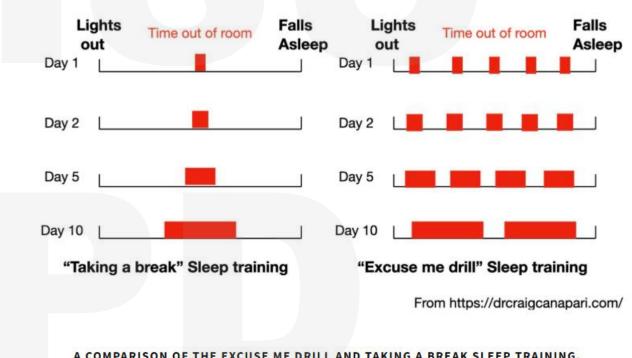
- Try a visual bedtime chart
- Can add a small prize in the morning for following the routine



- Sleep fairy (or superhero) checks whether child stays in bed after lights out
- Child gets small prize or encouraging note in morning
- Eventually apply to night wakings
- OK to wake clock or light timer
- Turns on or off when child can get out of bed
- Set for 3-5 minutes after child typically wakes
- Gradually move later

Behavioral Interventions: Excuse Me Drill <u>or</u> Camping Out

- <u>Issue</u>: Difficulty sleeping without caregiver
- Benefits: Gradual way of child learning to fall asleep independently
- Steps: Babysleep.com



A COMPARISON OF THE EXCUSE ME DRILL AND TAKING A BREAK SLEEP TRAINING.
LIGHTS OUT: WHEN YOU TURN OUT THE LIGHTS. FALLS ASLEEP: WHEN YOUR CHILD FALLS ASLEEP
THE RED BLOCKS INDICATE WHEN YOU ARE OUT OF THE ROOM.

Case Example Follow-up



- Provided
 - Sleep tracking, resources, reinforcement
- Progress
 - Sibling in own bed, ABA, QOL
- Next steps
 - Practice routine during nap
- Barriers
 - No cubby bed/safe place
 - Revolving illness
 - Monitoring equipment delay

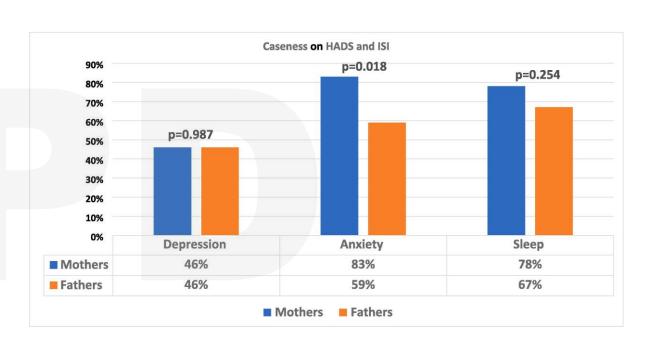


Epilepsy & Behavior



Health-related quality of life, depression, anxiety, and sleep in mothers and fathers of children with dravet syndrome in Sweden

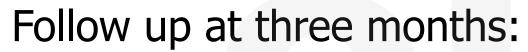
Colin Reilly a b c ス ⊠ , Björn Bjurulf a b c, Tove Hallböök a b c



Case Example Follow Up

Continues Behavioral Sleep Psychology







Cluster of seizures caused significant sleep disruption Needed PRN seizure medication and bridge medication

Very itchy; dermatology consult 7/2025 Hydroxyzine increased slightly; continue 3 mg melatonin (liquid) Ferritin ordered Awaiting cubby bed Continues with ABA

PRACTICE PATHWAY

Screen for sleep problems as part of annual visits

Identify medical cooccurring conditions Start with behavioral strategies if the family is willing/able to implement them

Medications should be used sparingly-to facilitate behavioral strategies

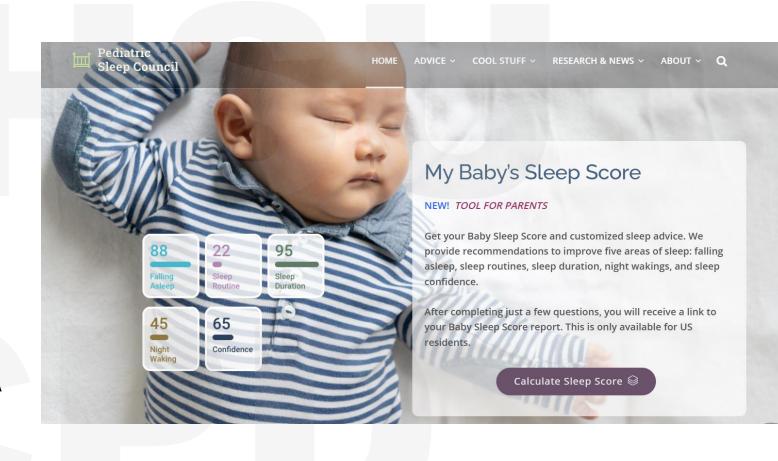
Use/choose medications to treat co-occurring conditions

Start at low doses, avoid polypharmacy and ensure close follow-up

Malow 2012; Buckley2021; Galion 2023

Resources

- A Clinical Guide to Pediatric Sleep: Diagnosis and Management of Sleep Problems 3rd Edition (Mindell and Owens)
- Pediatric Sleep Problems: A Clinicians Guide to Behavioral Interventions (Metzler)
- Babysleep.com



Medication Resources

Sleep Disorders:

Parents' Medication Guide





https://www.aacap.org/App_Themes/AACAP/Docs/families_and_youth/med_guides/SleepDisorders_Parents-Medication-Guide-web.pdf

SPECIAL ARTICLE LEVEL OF RECOMMENDATION

Practice guideline: Treatment for insomnia and disrupted sleep behavior in children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder

Report of the Guideline Development, Dissemination, and Implementation Subcommittee of the American Academy of Neurology

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Thank you!

• Questions?



Behavioral Interventions: Bedtime Pass

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TREATING BEDTIME RESISTANCE WITH THE BEDTIME PASS: A SYSTEMATIC REPLICATION AND COMPONENT ANALYSIS WITH 3-YEAR-OLDS

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