

QUALITY OF SLEEP IN NEWLY-DIAGNOSED MILD TO MODERATE ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE PATIENTS: RESULTS OF THE CASUAL STUDY

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Introduction: Alzheimer's disease (AD) is an age-related neuro-degenerative disorder characterized by progressive loss of memory and deterioration of higher cognitive functions. The sleep-wake cycle in AD patients is often disrupted and is associated with cognitive and functional decline. Poor sleep quality can also exacerbate behavior problems and increase caregivers burden. Despite the significant negative impact of sleep disturbance on AD patients, there are few published studies in our setting about sleep quality of AD patients.

Objective: To assess the quality of sleep in newly-diagnosed mild to moderate AD patients.

Patients and methods: A three-month prospective, epidemiological, and multicenter study was conducted in 993 AD patients with a MMSE 11-25 score. Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index (PSQI), and the Epworth Sleepiness Scale (ESS) were used to assess the sleep quality. Hypnotic and acetylcholinesterase inhibitor treatments were also recorded.

Results: The global PSQI scores showed significant improvement at month 3 over baseline (6.2 ± 3.8 vs. 7.2 ± 4.4 ; $p < 0.001$). Poor sleep quality (PSQI score > 5) and mild daytime sleepiness (ESS score 7-13) were both reported by a considerable proportion of participants at baseline (58.6% and 43.8%, respectively) and at month 3 (51.8% and 38.8%, respectively) ($p < 0.005$).

Conclusions: Poor sleep quality in newly-diagnosed mild-moderate AD patients are frequent due principally to numerous night or early morning awakenings. The use of hypnotics does not seem as effective as it should. An accurate diagnosis of the neurologic disorder and comprehensive review of the current medications are important for understanding possible causes of poor sleep quality.