

Sleep disorder

A **sleep disorder** is a problem that stops people from sleeping normally. There are many sleep disorders, and some of them are very serious. A test commonly ordered for some sleep disorders is the [polysomnogram](#).

Types of sleep disorders

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Sleep disorders can be put into groups. These groups include:

- **Dysomnia** - these are sleep disorders which cause too much or too little sleep. Some of these are caused within the body while some are externally caused. For example, [insomnia](#) and [narcolepsy](#) are two of the dysomnias.
- **Circadian rhythm sleep disorders** - these cause sleeping at unusual times, such as too early, too late or not often. People with these disorders can usually get enough sleep, just at the "wrong" time of day. One example is [Narcolepsy](#). These disorders are sometimes included among the dysomnias. [MeSH](#)
- **Parasomnias** - these are doing things not normally done while sleeping, without the person being aware of what they are doing. They include [walking](#), [eating](#), [dressing](#), bedwetting and other events during sleep.
- **Medical** or **psychiatric** disorders - these problems may also cause trouble sleeping. People with [depression](#) or [alcoholism](#) may sleep poorly.

([Sleeping sickness](#), a [disease](#) carried by the [Tsetse fly](#), is **not** classified as a sleep disorder.)

Common sleep disorders

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The most common sleep disorders include:

- [Bruxism](#): grinding or clenching the teeth while sleeping can happen
- Delayed sleep phase syndrome/disorder (DSPS): a [circadian rhythm](#) sleep disorder (see above): waking up and falling asleep much later than normal, but with no problem staying asleep
- [Hatzfeldt Syndrome](#), or Systemic Neuro-Epiphysial Disorder: an irregular sleep pattern, as well as irregular [behavior](#)
- [Hypopnea syndrome](#): abnormally shallow or slow breathing while sleeping
- [Narcolepsy](#): falling asleep spontaneously and unwillingly (by accident) at the wrong times, such as during the day

- [Night terror disorder](#): sudden awakening from sleep showing [fear](#) or [terror](#)
- [Parasomnias](#): see above
- Periodic [limb](#) movement disorder (PLMD): Sudden uncontrolled movement of arms and/or legs during sleep, for example kicking the legs. (Can seem like *hypnic jerk*, but [hypnic jerk](#) is not a disorder.)
- Primary insomnia: inability to get to sleep or stay asleep, not caused by any other disorder
- Rapid eye movement behavior disorder: acting out violent or dramatic dreams while in "[rapid eye movement](#)" (REM) sleep, also called dream sleep
- [Restless legs syndrome](#) (RLS): urge or need to move legs. People with RLS often also have PLMD.
- [Shift work](#) sleep disorder
- [Sleep apnea](#) (obstructive type): often waking suddenly when breathing stops, and usually loud [snoring](#)^[1]
- [Sleep paralysis](#): temporary [paralysis](#) of the body shortly before or after sleep. Sleep paralysis may be accompanied by [hallucinations](#) of [sight](#), hearing or touch. It is quite common.
- [Sleepwalking](#): one of the parasomnias, "Sleepwalking — also known as somnambulism — involves getting up and walking around while in a state of sleep."^[2]

Common causes of sleep disorders

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Changes in life style, such as shift work change or travelling over several [time zones](#), can cause sleep disorders. Some other problems that can cause sleeping problems include:

- [Anxiety](#)
- [Pain](#)
- Environmental [noise](#)
- Various drugs and [medications](#)
- [Hormone](#) imbalance
- [Circadian rhythm](#) disorders

Treatment

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A sleep [diary](#) or log can be used to help diagnose (define) the problem. It can also be used to measure improvements.

According to Dr. William Dement of the [Stanford Sleep Center](#), anyone who snores and is sleepy in the daytime should see a doctor about sleep disorders.^{[[source?](#)]}

In case of [chronic pain](#), both the pain and the sleep problems should be treated. [Pain](#) can lead to sleep problems and vice versa.

The choice of a treatment for a sleep disorder depends on the patient's diagnosis, their medical and [psychiatric](#) history, and how they prefer to be treated. Medications sometimes work fast. On the other hand, sometimes behavioral treatment of insomnia may give more lasting results.

References

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1. [↑](#) ["What Sleep Position is the Best for Sleep Apnea?"](#). *Sleepingocean*. 2020-10-24. Archived from [the original](#) on 2021-03-01. Retrieved 2021-03-19.
2. [↑](#) ["Sleepwalking - Symptoms and causes"](#). *Mayo Clinic*. Retrieved 2023-01-25.

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