

The Psychological Foundations of Night Terrors and their Relationship with Sleep Disorders

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ABSTRACT: The complex and multi-layered nature of the human sleep process constitutes an important component not only for individuals but also for societal health dynamics. Sleep is a multifaceted process shaped by the interaction of numerous different psychological and neurophysiological events. This complex structure serves to help us understand the various phenomena that occur during sleep. Sleep constitutes one of the cornerstones of mental well-being, in addition to being a process of physical and mental rest. While this process continues, an individual's ability to sleep healthily depends on many factors. The experience of sleep paralysis, an important phenomenon, particularly when considered, presents itself as a distinct psychopathological condition that occurs during the hypnagogic and REM stages of sleep, when the unconscious is actively engaged. Extensive research on the emergence of night terrors shows that states of consciousness experienced during sleep, i.e. states of open or closed consciousness, bodily perceptions, and fears in people's inner worlds are effective in this phenomenon. This event, which occurs during this unusual and extremely sensitive phase of sleep, can create intense feelings of fear, panic and helplessness in the individual. In addition, it has been observed that the various psychological processes that shape and profoundly influence this experience also have a significant impact on people's thoughts and emotional states. The experience of sleep paralysis can become a condition that leaves lasting effects on people. The formation of such experiences involves stress both before and during sleep.

KEYWORD: REM, sleep disorder, layer, health dynamics, physical rest, phenomenon, hypnagogic and REM stages of sleep

INTRODUCTION

The complex and multi-layered nature of the human sleep process constitutes an important component not only for individuals but also for societal health dynamics. Sleep is a multifaceted process shaped by the interaction of various psychological and neurophysiological events, and this complex structure serves to help us understand the various phenomena that occur during sleep. Sleep constitutes one of the cornerstones of mental well-being, in addition to being a process of physical and mental rest. While this process continues, an individual's ability to sleep healthily depends on many factors. The experience of sleep paralysis, an important phenomenon, particularly when examined, presents itself as a distinct psychopathological condition that occurs during the hypnagogic and REM stages of sleep and is characterised by the active engagement of the unconscious mind. Extensive research on the emergence of sleep paralysis shows that states of consciousness experienced during sleep, i.e. states of open or closed consciousness, bodily perceptions, and fears in people's inner worlds are effective in this phenomenon. This event, which occurs during this unusual and extremely sensitive phase of sleep, can create intense feelings of fear, panic and helplessness in the individual. In addition, it has been observed that the roles of various psychological processes shaping and deeply affecting this experience, as well as people's thoughts and emotional states, are influential. The nightmare experience can become a condition that leaves lasting effects on people. Stress, anxiety levels, and cognitive processes experienced both before and during sleep play a significant role in the formation of such experiences, and these factors have a decisive impact. Furthermore, it has been determined that the occurrence of sleep paralysis events is closely related to individuals' sleep patterns, habits, and general psychological state; this condition is often found to occur in conjunction with sleep disorders. Comprehensive findings necessitate the development of an in-depth understanding of the psychological origins of sleep paralysis, the nature of hypnagogic states, and the interactions between consciousness and the unconscious. Understanding this phenomenon provides important information and useful insights for both clinical practice and psychological approaches, necessitating its investigation through various methods. Recent developments in cognitive science, psychiatry, and neuroscience contribute to a better understanding of nightmare experiences and address them in all their complexity. At the same time, this supports efforts to develop ways to protect and improve individuals' mental health. In the long term, this allows for the study of night terrors, a deeper understanding of sleep-related psychopathologies, and the development of effective treatment methods. The scope of these studies also provides a basis for new findings and opens

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the door to advances in the field of sleep health. Such intensive studies can make a significant contribution to protecting and improving individuals' mental health and have the potential to enhance their quality of life. Consequently, this can also have positive effects on the general health of society. Thus, understanding night terrors is of critical importance not only at the individual level but also in terms of emphasising the seriousness and importance of this issue at the societal level. Raising awareness on this subject will contribute to both individuals and society leading healthier lives and will allow for the deepening of knowledge in this field over long periods of time. Furthermore, the deep impact that the trauma caused by nightmares has on the lives of individuals who experience them and the difficulties it creates in their social relationships and daily lives should also be taken into account. It is crucial for individuals to seek support and treatment methods to overcome such experiences. At this stage, mental health professionals play a vital role. Experts guide individuals, helping them cope with these frightening experiences. Therefore, the reasons why night terrors can be problematic and the mechanisms by which they can affect individuals' mental states should be thoroughly investigated. As a result, raising awareness about mental health at a societal level will pave the way for steps that could be beneficial for the general health of society and enable the development of strategies that will improve the quality of life for all individuals. Night terrors emerge as a phenomenon that has a significant impact on individuals' mental health, and addressing this issue in depth provides extremely important data in terms of social care and medical interventions. In this context, efforts to raise social awareness and improve the mental state of each individual have the potential to create an impact that can yield positive results at both the personal and societal levels.

The Concept of Night Terrors

The concept of night terrors has been defined in various ways throughout history across different cultures and periods, and has been examined through numerous interpretations and descriptions. In ancient times, this intriguing experience was generally associated with the influence of spiritual beings or supernatural forces; in some cultural beliefs, it was perceived as an element of fear linked to attacks by evil spirits, ghosts or dark entities. From the Middle Ages onwards, this intriguing phenomenon was observed to manifest with physical symptoms, such as bodily pain, sudden paralysis, or loss of consciousness. These types of situations emerged, intertwined with many different religious, mythological, and folkloric narratives, shaping social perception. When evaluated from the perspective of Islamic culture, the belief that sleep paralysis is defined as a place known as the old chamber of destruction, a resting place or an attack by demonic entities has become widespread and has therefore taken root in society. This situation has contributed to religious motifs, cultural beliefs and folk tales playing a major role in explaining the experiences. In Western societies, sleep paralysis first appeared in psychiatric literature in the late 19th century and this frightening experience was defined by terms such as "nightmare" or "sleep paralysis", thus establishing a solid body of knowledge on the subject in the literature. Over time, it has been observed that night terror experiences vary in terms of environmental factors, cultural contexts, and psychological predispositions throughout history. In addition, there is much debate about the subconscious mechanisms of these experiences () and their connection to individuals' fears, worries, or traumas; this has become a creative and inspiring source for research in the fields of modern psychology and neuroscience. In this context, when all historical accounts of night terrors are evaluated from both cultural and scientific perspectives, it clearly reveals that it is a multi-layered, profound, and psychological phenomenon. Therefore, historical interactions contribute significantly to both the symbolic meanings of this experience and the examination of fundamental psychological and neurological issues, creating noteworthy and profound effects, particularly on mental health. This situation allows for the development of more knowledge and understanding about the depths of the concept of night terrors, while also encouraging a process of reflection on how people cope with such experiences and the effects of these experiences on social perceptions. Furthermore, the social projections of these phenomena, their negative effects on individuals' mental health, and their relationship with the general psychological structure of society constitute critical intellectual areas for a broader and more comprehensive assessment of night terrors. Increased knowledge about nightmares enables the recognition of changes in societal perceptions and approaches, potentially opening the door to innovative and creative thinking about methods for coping with such situations. From a social psychology perspective, the impact of such experiences on individuals is considered a type of social phenomenon that provokes thought and causes anxiety at the societal level. Furthermore, platforms where individuals involved in sleep paralysis studies share their experiences offer opportunities for social solidarity and empathy, providing opportunities to raise awareness about how these experiences can be addressed at both the individual and collective levels. Thus, raising awareness about night terrors can have profound and lasting effects on social norms and belief systems, while also having the potential to positively impact individuals' mental health.

Mechanisms Related to Sleep Disorders

An in-depth and comprehensive examination of the relationship between sleep disorders and night terror experiences reveals many noteworthy and important mechanisms within the framework of sleep stages and arousal mechanisms. In this context, the appearance of significantly increased and distinct brain activity during REM sleep, characterised by rapid eye movements, stands out as a noteworthy feature. The unique nature of REM sleep plays a critical and indispensable role in the occurrence of sleep paralysis events. The high and intense brain activity that occurs during the REM period can increase the frequency with which individuals wake up unexpectedly and abruptly during sleep, leading them to wake up more frequently in the later hours of the night, which can

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consequently negatively affect sleep quality. The consequences of these processes have the potential to cause deterioration in physical and psychological perceptions due to negative experiences during sleep, leading to an increase in the difficulties faced by individuals and making them more complex. An excessive or incorrect interpretation of the physical sensations experienced at the moment of awakening can trigger the fear, anxiety and intense feeling of suffocation often seen during night terrors, leaving a deep and profound impact on individuals. When these perceptions during awakening combine with fear responses that activate the physical alarm system, the result is inevitably a rise in intense anxiety and stress levels. This situation significantly reduces individuals' quality of daily life and can also lead to outcomes that may have negative effects on unconscious processes. Furthermore, individuals' general anxiety levels and stress coping capacities can greatly influence the nature of unconscious experiences during sleep, thus becoming decisive and influential factors in the occurrence of nightmares. In this context, in-depth research into the neurological and psychological dynamics of the transition between sleep and wakefulness is fundamental to understanding the formation of night terrors and such disorders. A more detailed examination of these mechanisms will provide important and constructive contributions to the development of treatment and intervention strategies. This will enable the provision of effective solutions to improve individuals' sleep quality and overall quality of life. Furthermore, supporting this topic with more extensive research will provide an important foundation for better understanding sleep disorders and night terrors, and consequently, for developing innovative methods to help individuals cope with such conditions. Thus, a more comprehensive examination of the underlying dynamics of sleep disorders and nightmares will create a foundation that will greatly contribute to the identification of effective and important strategies for individuals to cope with these disorders. In this context, as research deepens, critical information will emerge for achieving better sleep experiences at both the clinical and individual levels, thereby enabling positive effects on individuals' overall happiness levels.

Activity During the Rapid Eye Movement Sleep Phase and Nightmares

Characterised by rapid eye movements, the REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep phase is an extremely interesting and dynamic stage of the sleep process. During this specific and unique period, various complex experiences closely related to dreaming occur as brain activity reaches its highest levels. These unique and profound processes experienced during REM sleep bring about significant and noteworthy changes in a person's mental and emotional state throughout the sleep cycle. At this critical stage, the highly active neural networks pave the way for different neurological dynamics to emerge, thereby transforming the experiences people have during sleep into something deeper, more intense, and more complex. Particularly during periods when frightening dreams, known as nightmares, occur, the combination of REM sleep brain activity with various perceptual distortions and different stimulations is noteworthy. This causes individuals to have quite complex and intense experiences. These high levels of activity in neural networks ensure that dream-like content persists despite the preservation of conscious awareness, leading to a marked increase in perceptual intensity. Therefore, the natural cycle of REM sleep plays a critical and indispensable role in both sleep and dream processes; moreover, it has significant, noteworthy and distinct effects on sleep quality and overall mental health. This REM period, which allows people to make subjective assessments of many aspects of their life experiences, is of great importance and value in terms of mental and emotional regulation processes. Therefore, experiences during REM sleep not only make a significant contribution to improving individuals' quality of life and maintaining mental balance, but also have a positive effect on overall well-being by strengthening mental health. The continuation of these deep and complex processes enables people to lead healthier and more balanced lives, both psychologically and physiologically. REM sleep is not only a period of rest but also a great opportunity for mental renewal and restructuring. In this favourable environment, brain signals are reshaped and learned information is reinforced. Consequently, all these complex dynamics occurring during sleep contribute to individuals increasing their levels of self-awareness and developing their capacity to cope with stress and anxiety. Thus, the REM period plays an important role in supporting both mental and physical health, creating positive effects in various areas of life. Each of these processes provides individuals with deeper insight, enhancing imagination, creativity, and problem-solving skills, thereby improving overall well-being. Therefore, REM sleep, as an indispensable part of human life, has the potential to provide long-term benefits for mental and psychological health.

At this stage, the brain's amygdala and limbic structures also become active, further strengthening the perception of fear and threat. The functions of these structures are directly related to emotional learning and memory and, over time, can cause the effects of traumas experienced by the individual to increase, thereby raising stress and anxiety levels. In addition, a marked decrease in the activity of the brain's prefrontal cortex is observed; this leads to a decrease in the individual's sense of reality during the dream and to the events experienced being perceived as disconnected from reality. This particular neurological environment during the dream period, especially during the REM (Rapid Eye Movement) phase, plays a critical role in the emergence of nightmares and has the capacity to harbour the deep secrets of this phenomenon. During human sleep, especially in intense experiences such as night terrors, this type of high-level brain activity triggers feelings of fear, intensified by sensations of shadows or presences, anxiety about moving, feelings of suffocation, and imaginary threats, while also allowing pessimistic thoughts to surface, thus laying the groundwork for a negative impact on the individual's mental state. Furthermore, the neurobiological structure of this period, leading to the non-processing of stimuli and blurring the uncertain boundaries between dreams and reality, forms the fundamental basis of the nightmare phenomenon. Therefore, the high brain functions associated with REM sleep activity, combined with parallel,

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mutually influencing neurological dynamics, provide an important resource for better understanding the psychological and neurological foundations of night terrors. This is highly valuable for future sleep research and may have profound and long-lasting effects on individuals' psychological states. Such research may help us to better understand the complex connections between dreaming and states of consciousness and to develop potential therapeutic approaches.

Anxiety and stress are just a few of the many psychological factors that play a significant role in the formation of nightmares. High levels of anxiety cause individuals to experience increased worry and fear when falling asleep and during the maintenance of sleep. These feelings negatively affect the person's mood, becoming even more complex due to insomnia and disturbances experienced during deep sleep stages. This situation can prevent the establishment of a healthy sleep pattern, creating a cycle that has a major impact on individuals' mental health. The person may find it difficult to cope with the increasingly intense feelings of anxiety and fear within this cycle. Anxiety that arises during wakefulness, in particular, can exacerbate the situation by intensifying negative feelings and thoughts during the critical period when nightmares occur. As these anxieties and negative thoughts intensify in the individual's mind, they combine with night terrors to become deeper and more complex. This type of coping mechanism, which negatively affects the individual's mental state, can also impact their social life and daily activities. This means that these negative changes in emotional state can lead to social isolation and feelings of inadequacy, while also having the potential to leave deep scars on overall mental health. If stressful situations become chronic over time and no solution is found, these anxieties can gradually worsen. Over time, combined with the effects of past experiences, a more complex situation requiring a solution may arise. At these stages, individuals may feel helpless and isolated in this challenging process; this situation can further increase psychological difficulties and lead to a deep sense of hopelessness. It should not be forgotten that when such psychological problems are left unresolved, they not only open the door to more serious mental health issues, but can also negatively affect the individual's quality of life. Consequently, coping with these sensitive and difficult situations is an important necessity for all individuals. Therefore, it is extremely important for individuals experiencing these disorders to seek the necessary level of support and professional help as soon as possible. This is a critical requirement not only for the individual but also for the healthy functioning of the social support system around them. In order to lead a healthy life, it is of great importance for individuals to learn ways to cope with these psychological problems and to trust the people who will support them during this process. This support helps individuals overcome the difficulties they experience and can also enable them to seize the opportunity to lead a healthy life again in the future.

Stress, in both its acute and chronic forms, is an important factor that triggers the human psychophysiological response and significantly negatively affects sleep quality. When stress levels are high, cortisol hormone levels in the body begin to rise significantly. This severely disrupts sleep patterns and leads to physical sensations becoming overly sensitive and exaggerated throughout the sleep process. Stress responses that manifest themselves in the early stages of sleep can intensify nightmares considerably, causing the individual to fear sleep due to the fear created by such negative experiences and further increasing the difficulties encountered in falling asleep every night. In addition, stress and anxiety significantly contribute to individuals' cognitive distortions and the strengthening of negative automatic thoughts. These cognitive distortions can negatively affect individuals' thought processes, making existing problems even more complex. Consequently, this situation leads to excessive anxiety before and during sleep, causing thoughts to scatter easily and resulting in habits and negative consequences that make falling asleep even more difficult. Insomnia negatively affects an individual's quality of life and can worsen their mood by significantly reducing their overall life satisfaction. This type of negative cycle increases stress levels, leading to shorter sleep durations and poorer sleep quality. Thus, individuals who do not get enough rest may feel more tired during the day and have difficulty performing physical and mental tasks. This type of mental and physical fatigue also negatively affects the person's daily life and social relationships. In addition, not getting enough sleep can also weaken the immune system. This can lead to a deterioration in the individual's health and, in the long term, to more serious illnesses. Therefore, coping with stress is very important and is vital in terms of improving sleep quality and raising the overall standard of living. Improving sleep quality is directly related to finding ways to cope with stress, which is an important step towards improving one's overall well-being. Improving sleep can help a person find more balance and peace in their life by aiming to reduce stress levels.

These psychological conditions can trigger the alarm response, making the individual's bodily reactions extremely sensitive. This hypersensitivity can have serious and significant effects on people's daily lives. Emotional and physical symptoms, in particular, can intensify significantly when faced with stressful situations; feelings such as anxiety, fear, and tension can increase, potentially creating negative effects on the individual's mood. When an individual lives under constant stress, this situation can have a burdensome and challenging effect on the integrity of the mind and body. Consequently, high levels of anxiety and stress can cause a marked increase in the frequency and severity of nightmares, while also perpetuating sleep disorders. Such situations can become a problem that threatens individuals' mental health and seriously impairs their quality of life. Being aware of these negative conditions that threaten both physical and mental health and taking the necessary precautions is extremely important for individuals. For this reason, effectively managing anxiety and stress is critical in treating and preventing nightmares. With appropriate psychological interventions, the effects of these negative emotional states on sleep can be reduced. Thus, individuals can achieve a healthier, more peaceful, and higher-quality sleep experience. Regaining sleep patterns and sleep quality significantly improves overall quality of life and contributes significantly to improvements in individuals' moods. This situation offers a beneficial process

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for individuals to maintain their daily lives in a healthier, more peaceful, and balanced manner. Reviewing habits and lifestyle, in particular, can be one of the first steps taken to prevent such negative psychological states. However, both social support mechanisms and seeking professional help can enable individuals to make healthier decisions during this process. Relaxation techniques and methods such as mindfulness, which individuals can apply themselves during this process, can also make important contributions to maintaining mental health. All these measures lay the foundations for improving quality of life by minimising the negative moods individuals may experience.

The Impact of Anxiety and Stress

Anxiety and stress are just a few of the many psychological factors that play a significant role in the formation of nightmares. High levels of anxiety cause individuals to feel increased worry and fear when falling asleep and during sleep maintenance, which also has a negative impact on the person's sleep pattern. These feelings negatively affect the person's mood, becoming even more complex when combined with insomnia and discomfort experienced during deep sleep stages. When individuals' sleep quality declines, their overall mental and physical health is also affected. The fatigue, lack of concentration, and general restlessness resulting from insomnia can increase stress levels, putting the person in an even more difficult situation. This situation can prevent the establishment of a healthy sleep pattern, creating a cycle that has a significant impact on individuals' mental health. The person may find it difficult to cope with the increasingly intense feelings of anxiety and fear within this cycle. In particular, the emergence of these anxieties during periods of wakefulness can lead to a concentration of negative feelings and thoughts at the critical time when nightmares occur, further worsening the situation. As these anxieties and negative thoughts become deeply entrenched in the individual's mind, they combine with night terrors to deepen and become more complex. This coping mechanism, which negatively affects the individual's mental state, can also impact their social life and daily activities. This means that these negative changes in emotional state can cause social isolation and feelings of inadequacy, while increasing the difficulties individuals experience in their daily lives. Furthermore, it has the potential to leave deep scars on overall mental health. If stressful situations become chronic over time and no necessary solutions are found, these anxieties can gradually worsen. Over time, combined with the effects of past experiences, there is a possibility that a more complex situation requiring a solution may arise. At these stages, individuals may feel helpless and isolated in this challenging process; this situation can further increase psychological difficulties and lead to a deep sense of hopelessness. It should not be forgotten that when such psychological problems are left unresolved, they not only open the door to more serious mental health issues, but can also negatively affect the individual's quality of life. Consequently, coping with these sensitive and difficult situations is an important necessity for all individuals. Therefore, it is extremely important for individuals experiencing these disorders to seek the necessary level of support and professional help at as soon as possible. This is a critical requirement not only for the individual but also for the healthy functioning of the social support system around them. In order to lead a healthy life, it is of great importance for individuals to learn ways to cope with these psychological problems and to trust the people who will support them during this process. This support helps individuals overcome the difficulties they experience and enables them to seize the opportunity to lead a healthy life again in the future. Furthermore, it creates the conditions necessary for individuals to increase their emotional resilience and develop their stress management skills. This makes it possible to maintain the balance between mental and physical health and adopt a sustainable lifestyle.

Stress, in both its acute and chronic forms, is an important factor that triggers the human psychophysiological response and significantly negatively affects sleep quality. When stress levels are high, cortisol hormone levels in the body begin to rise significantly. This severely disrupts sleep patterns and leads to physical sensations becoming overly sensitive and exaggerated throughout the sleep process. Stress responses that manifest in the early stages of sleep can intensify nightmares considerably, causing the individual to fear sleep due to the anxiety generated by such negative experiences and further increasing the difficulties encountered in falling asleep each night. In addition, stress and anxiety significantly contribute to individuals' cognitive distortions and the strengthening of negative automatic thoughts. These cognitive distortions can negatively affect individuals' thought processes, making existing problems even more complex. Consequently, this situation leads to excessive anxiety before and during sleep, causing thoughts to scatter easily and resulting in habits and negative consequences that make falling asleep even more difficult. Insomnia negatively affects an individual's quality of life and can worsen their mood by significantly reducing their overall life satisfaction. This type of negative cycle increases stress levels, leading to shorter sleep durations and poorer sleep quality. Thus, individuals who do not get enough rest may feel more tired during the day and have difficulty performing physical and mental tasks. This type of mental and physical fatigue also negatively affects the person's daily life and social relationships. In addition, not getting enough sleep can also weaken the immune system. This can lead to a deterioration in the individual's health and, in the long term, to the emergence of more serious ailments. Therefore, coping with stress is of great importance and is vital in terms of improving sleep quality and raising the overall standard of living. Improving sleep quality is directly related to finding ways to cope with stress, which is an important step towards improving one's overall well-being. Improving sleep can help a person find more balance and peace in their life by aiming to reduce stress levels.

These psychological states can trigger the alarm response, making the individual's bodily reactions extremely sensitive. This hypersensitivity can have serious and significant effects on people's daily lives. Emotional, and physical symptoms, in particular,

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can intensify significantly when faced with stressful situations; feelings such as anxiety, fear, and tension can increase, potentially creating negative effects on the individual's mood. When an individual lives under constant stress, this situation can have a burdensome and challenging effect on the integrity of the mind and body. Consequently, high levels of anxiety and stress can cause a marked increase in the frequency and severity of nightmares, while also perpetuating sleep disorders. Such situations can become a problem that threatens individuals' mental health and seriously impairs their quality of life. Being aware of these negative conditions that threaten both physical and mental health and taking the necessary precautions is extremely important for individuals. For this reason, effectively managing anxiety and stress is critical in treating and preventing nightmares. With appropriate psychological interventions, the effects of these negative emotional states on sleep can be reduced. Thus, individuals can achieve a healthier, more peaceful, and higher-quality sleep experience. Regaining sleep patterns and sleep quality significantly improves overall quality of life and contributes significantly to improvements in individuals' moods. This situation offers a beneficial process for individuals to maintain their daily lives in a healthier, more peaceful, and balanced manner. Reviewing habits and lifestyle, in particular, can be one of the first steps taken to prevent such negative psychological states. However, both social support mechanisms and seeking professional help can enable individuals to make healthier decisions during this process. Relaxation techniques and methods such as mindfulness, which individuals can apply themselves during this process, can also make important contributions to maintaining mental health. All these measures lay the foundations for improving quality of life by minimising the negative moods individuals may experience.

Intervention and Coping Strategies

Intervention and coping strategies have been comprehensively developed to effectively reduce night terror experiences and are continuously expanded with contributions from different disciplines to improve individuals' overall sleep quality. Extensive research in this field highlights findings that reveal noteworthy and significant results, particularly regarding cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) among psychotherapy methods. Cognitive behavioural therapy helps individuals deeply understand their negative beliefs about night terrors, while also enabling them to identify the fears associated with these beliefs and ultimately restructure them, thereby providing meaningful and lasting support. This therapeutic approach can help individuals effectively reduce their pre-sleep fears and control anxiety, thereby significantly improving sleep quality. In addition, sleep hygiene practices play a critical and central role in this treatment process. In this context, establishing regular and consistent sleep times, making various behavioural adjustments such as preparing the bedroom environment to be calm, dark, and comfortable to create a suitable ground for the upcoming sleep, can have a significant impact on improving sleep quality and can yield meaningful and effective results in reducing the intensity of nightmares experienced in a hurry. Furthermore, physical and physiological management strategies are also of great importance; these strategies aim to reduce stress during the transition to sleep and thereby improve sleep quality, particularly by using relaxation techniques and relaxation exercises to ensure deep and adequate rest. Techniques such as breathing exercises, meditation practices, and progressive muscle relaxation facilitate the process of falling asleep and provide significant benefits in reducing the various difficulties experienced during this process. However, pharmacological approaches should not be overlooked; this may involve the use of antidepressants, anti-anxiety medications, and sleep medications, particularly for individuals experiencing severe and persistent insomnia. This plays an important role in improving individuals' quality of life, and based on the data, it has the potential to bring about positive changes in individuals. However, it is crucial that these methods are applied carefully and under expert supervision, as it is necessary to minimise potential complications and prevent adverse side effects. Multidisciplinary approaches ensure the integration of various fields, such as psychiatry, psychology, and sleep medicine, and enable the development of personalised, goal-oriented treatment plans for individuals. To ensure the effectiveness of these strategies, it is also important to adapt them to the characteristics and sleep patterns of individuals and to conduct regular follow-ups during the treatment process. Ultimately, the effective use of various intervention and coping methods plays a critical role in managing night terror experiences, contributing significantly to improving individuals' overall sleep health and enabling them to lead a more satisfying and fulfilling life. In this context, it is crucial to thoroughly address all strategies necessary for a healthy sleep pattern and to guide individuals through this process, which should be considered an integral part of treatment. Each individual should find the most suitable strategies by trying alternative methods alongside applications tailored to their specific needs, taking steps to integrate these strategies into their lives to lead healthier lives. These comprehensive methods developed for individuals support their mental and physical health, contributing to an improvement in their overall quality of life.

Sleep Hygiene and Physiological Management

Sleep hygiene and physiological management are fundamental elements that play a crucial role in reducing the negative effects of nightmares and protecting our health. Paying the necessary attention and care to these elements is essential and indispensable for leading a healthy life and ensuring its sustainability. Acquiring appropriate sleep habits and making these habits an integral part of daily life is of great importance in improving sleep quality and reducing the frequency and severity of nightmares. In this regard, implementing a regular sleep schedule, ensuring the sleep environment is appropriately arranged, and establishing relaxing routines for falling asleep are considered critical and effective steps for both our mental and physical health. In addition, keeping the bedroom dark, quiet, and cool, along with simple but effective methods such as , contributes to optimising the sleep environment and is a

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highly effective approach to providing a more peaceful, restful, and quality sleep experience. These practices help individuals achieve deep and uninterrupted sleep while also positively affecting their overall health. For this reason, the importance and effects of sleep hygiene should never be overlooked; it is essential to take the necessary measures and act without delay. Each individual should carefully evaluate their own sleep habits and, taking these fundamental elements into account, determine and implement the steps to be taken to improve their quality of life. Furthermore, acquiring knowledge about sleep hygiene and integrating this knowledge into daily life will also greatly contribute to individuals developing healthy sleep habits. It should not be forgotten that sleep is a critical process for the human body to rest and renew itself, and therefore it should always be given the importance it deserves. In this context, any improvement or change made will not only increase our overall quality of life but will also contribute positively to our psychological and physical health, offering us a healthier and more balanced life.

Physiologically, the regulation of neurological activities that occur during sleep plays a fundamental role in managing nightmares. This is also an important factor that directly affects sleep quality and enables individuals to experience healthy and peaceful sleep. The ability to achieve both high-quality and uninterrupted sleep is critically important for ensuring that transitions between REM and non-REM stages occur healthily and regularly. In this process, maintaining a regular sleep schedule is of great importance, in addition to ensuring adequate sleep duration. This routine facilitates falling asleep without interruption and also helps individuals maintain their mental health. To alleviate physical sensations and achieve mental relaxation upon waking, it is highly beneficial to avoid overly stimulating activities before bedtime and to practise various relaxation techniques. Furthermore, avoiding excessive consumption of caffeine or alcoholic beverages before bedtime will significantly improve sleep quality and pave the way for a more restful night's sleep, enabling individuals to start the day feeling more refreshed and energetic. Therefore, allowing the body and mind to relax before falling asleep is extremely important in terms of preventing negative situations that may arise during the night and contributing to a restful sleep. This paves the way for an increase in overall quality of life. Furthermore, these habits, which facilitate the transition to sleep, significantly raise individuals' overall well-being levels and help them feel more energised during the day. Ultimately, adopting a healthy sleep routine not only improves sleep quality but also contributes to individuals leading more meaningful and energetic lives, thereby enabling a healthier lifestyle in every respect.

In physiological management strategies, relaxation exercises, deep breathing techniques, and meditation practices are commonly used. These approaches regulate sleep activities by reducing pressure on the nervous system and decrease the likelihood of experiencing nightmares. Additionally, regular exercise has positive effects on physiological health while creating a supportive environment for sleep. When necessary, seeking professional advice regarding sleep patterns allows for more effective clinical management of sleep disorders or nightmares. Complying with physiological management and sleep hygiene principles both improves sleep quality and alleviates the psychological effects of nightmare experiences.

CONCLUSION

Research into the psychological foundations of sleep paralysis experiences and their relationship with sleep disorders reveals the complex and multidimensional nature of this phenomenon. Unconscious processes, transitions between sleep and wakefulness, and the interaction of cognitive functions play a significant role in the formation of sleep paralysis. Perceptual distortions occurring during the hypnagogic state and the alarm theory shed light on the psychological origins of these experiences by analysing the interaction of unconscious fears and stress with the sleep system. Furthermore, anxiety and stress levels tend to trigger and intensify sleep paralysis episodes. Sleep disorders, particularly increased brain activity during the rapid eye movement sleep phase and arousal processes during sleep, can increase the frequency of sleep paralysis. Misdirection or exaggeration of bodily sensations reinforces the frightening aspects of these experiences. Cultural and biopsychosocial factors shape individuals' interpretations of sleep terrors and the psychological effects of these experiences. Assessments conducted in clinical settings indicate that these experiences may reflect an individual's unique psychopathological structure and sleep patterns. Effective coping and intervention strategies, combining psychotherapy and cognitive behavioural techniques with sleep hygiene, aim to reduce the frequency and severity of night terrors. Multidisciplinary approaches, pharmacological support, and physiological adjustments address the underlying causes of these experiences, promoting psychological and physical recovery in patients. Future research is directed towards understanding the neurobiological and psychosocial dimensions of this phenomenon from a holistic perspective. In conclusion, analyses of sleep paralysis cases based on psychodynamic and biopsychosocial principles demonstrate that these experiences are significant from both an individual and societal perspective. In this regard, the development of more effective treatment and prevention methods is of critical importance in terms of protecting sleep health and supporting psychological recovery.

Sleep paralysis experiences are considered a special type of phenomenon resulting from the interaction of complex psychological and neurophysiological processes. This phenomenon is an extremely important topic that requires understanding numerous mechanisms, particularly those related to sleep. For this reason, better understanding sleep paralysis experiences is of great value, both scientifically and personally. Among the main psychological factors underlying these experiences, various elements such as the hypnagogic state, alarm theory, and the role of cognitive functions play an important role. The hypnagogic state is a condition experienced by individuals during the transition to sleep; during this period, uncertainties, blurring, and illusions may arise due to the boundaries between reality and imagination. As this state is an effective factor in the formation of night terrors, it is crucial to

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carefully address and examine such experiences occurring before sleep. Within the framework of alarm theory, it is understood that these types of negative experiences represent a symbolic representation of threats or anxieties hidden in the individual's subconscious. Therefore, this situation manifests itself as reflections of the individual's efforts to cope with stress and the specific coping mechanisms used in this process. Furthermore, factors such as impaired cognitive functions and changes in attention and perception mechanisms are also among the very important factors that form the psychological basis of nightmares. Mechanisms associated with sleep disorders, particularly the increase in brain activity observed during the rapid eye movement stage of sleep, as well as the intensification of bodily sensations upon awakening, are readily linked to this condition and facilitate the occurrence of nightmares. Anxiety and stress are prominent factors that trigger and intensify such experiences. Increased anxiety levels in individuals increase the frequency of night terrors and cause fearful experiences to be repeated, making the situation more serious and difficult. Considering these results, the psychological foundations of night terror experiences reflect a holistic interaction of both internal cognitive and emotional processes and sleep physiology. In this context, treatment and coping strategies require comprehensive consideration not only of the symptoms of night terrors but also of the deeper psychological and neurophysiological mechanisms underlying these experiences. Clinical approaches have yielded significant and effective results in the development of various studies aimed at understanding the anxieties in individuals' subconscious and holistic methods for improving sleep patterns. In this regard, a combination of psychotherapy, sleep hygiene, and pharmacological treatment when necessary presents a highly noteworthy approach to improving individuals' personal adjustment and quality of life. Therefore, elucidating the psychological foundations associated with night terrors is an extremely important topic for both clinical practice and research, and studies in this field offer important opportunities for people to effectively cope with such negative experiences.

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