

Polysomnographic characteristics of mood disorders : Depressive episode

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This study was carried out on a sample of 20 patients suffering from a depressive episode according to ICD-10 diagnostic criteria. All patients were drug or ECT free for at least two weeks. A control group of ten individuals was also included. The study aimed to identify the sleep patterns in depressive episode of mood disorder. All patients were subjected to full psychiatric sheet, an overnight polysomnogram was done for all patients and control individuals. Decreased sleep efficiency, shortened REM latency in all depressed patients and decreased SWS percentage in moderate and severe cases only were recorded. Prolonged first REM period, increased REM density and higher REM sleep proportion in the first half of the night, which may be more specific for depressed patients, were found. Sleep studies can help in different ways. It may help in the diagnosis of an occult primary sleep disorder. Also, sleep studies have a prognostic utility, which may be suggested from their ability to aid in predicting the response to antidepressant therapy. Moreover, sleep studies could predict an early recurrence of illness.