A SYSTEMIC PERSPECTIVE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MIGRAINE AND SLEEP DISORDERS

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Migraine and sleep disorders represent common chronic neurological conditions with significant socioeconomic and clinical implications. Numerous clinical and epidemiological studies demonstrate that migraine frequently coexists with insomnia, circadian rhythm disturbances, sleep apnea, and hypersomnolence disorders, suggesting more than a coincidental association. Current scientific evidence indicates that the regulation of sleep and the mechanisms underlying migraine pain share common neuroanatomical and neurochemical pathways.

The hypothalamus, brainstem, and diencephalic regions play a central role in both the modulation of nociceptive transmission and the maintenance of the sleep–wake cycle. Neurotransmitters including serotonin, dopamine, melatonin, orexins, and adenosine are actively involved in both processes. Dysregulation in these pathways can trigger migraine attacks as well as contribute to sleep fragmentation and insomnia.

Chronic insomnia is among the most common sleep disturbances seen in migraine patients. Studies show a bidirectional relationship: individuals with insomnia have an elevated risk of developing migraine, and migraine patients are more likely to develop persistent sleep difficulties. Disruption of REM sleep, especially nocturnal awakenings during this phase, is strongly associated with early-morning migraine onset, highlighting the role of circadian regulation.

Sleep apnea is another important comorbidity. Recurrent episodes of nocturnal hypoxia activate sympathetic responses and vascular instability, which may provoke migraine attacks and facilitate the progression to chronic migraine. Therefore, timely identification and treatment of sleep apnea can significantly reduce migraine severity and frequency.

Given the multifactorial links between migraine and sleep disturbances, management strategies must be integrated and interdisciplinary. Optimal treatment may include:

- regulation of sleep hygiene and circadian rhythms,
- cognitive-behavioral therapy for insomnia,
- pharmacological migraine prophylaxis,
- screening and treatment of anxiety and depressive symptoms,
- targeted management of sleep apnea where applicable.

Conclusion:
The coexistence of migraine and sleep disorders is grounded in shared neurobiological mechanisms, and each condition can exacerbate the other. Routine assessment of sleep patterns in migraine patients

is essential for effective clinical management. Combined therapeutic strategies that address both migraine and sleep disturbances lead to improved patient outcomes and enhanced quality of life.

Keywords: migraine, sleep disorders, insomnia, sleep apnea, circadian rhythm, integrated treatment, neural regulation.

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