

## **SLEEP AND HEADACHE**

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Hypnic headache (HH) is a rare short-lasting primary benign headache disorder, which occurs exclusively during sleep and usually begins after 50 years of age.

HH was first described in 1988 by Raskin. The International Classification of Headache Disorders II (2005) classifies HH in the "other primary headache" group (code 4.5).

The symptoms are moderate, throbbing, bilateral or unilateral headaches that wake the sufferer from sleep once or more times per night. HH typically begins a few hours after sleep onset and can last from 15-180min. There is generally no nausea, photophobia, phonophobia or autonomic symptoms. Often the attacks occur the same time every night. Polysomnographic studies have suggested an association with REM sleep. There are no controlled trials for the treatment of HH although Lithium carbonate has been described as drug of first choice.

To diagnose HH the attacks should occur 15 times per month and all other causes of headache during sleep should be excluded.

Cluster headache typically occurs within the first two hours of sleep. Several primary sleep disorders can evoke headache such as Sleep related breathing disorders, Insomnia and parasomnia such as idiopathic Remsleep Behaviour Disorder.

In children lack of sleep can be the only cause of headache, also in the daytime.

All headaches that occur during the day can also arise or persist during the night leading to disturbed night sleep.

Other causes for headache in the night are: drug withdrawal, temporal arteritis, intracranial primary and secondary neoplasm's, hydrocephalus, vascular lesions including subdural hematoma, chronic paroxysmal hemicrania and many others.

Good undisturbed sleep can also have a positive effect on headache as is often the case in common migraine.