

Recurrent Isolated Sleep Paralysis and Rapid Eye Movement Stages of Sleep

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DESCRIPTION

Sleep paralysis is a phenomenon that has been reported across different cultures and throughout history. It occurs when a person is unable to move or speak for a brief period when transitioning between sleep and wakefulness. This temporary paralysis can be accompanied by vivid hallucinations, and it can be a terrifying experience for those who suffer from it. The experience of sleep paralysis is not uncommon. According to some estimates, about 8% of the general population experiences it at some point in their lives. However, the incidence is higher in certain groups, such as individuals with psychiatric or neurological disorders, and those with a history of sleep disorders or trauma. One of the most distinctive features of sleep paralysis is the sensation of being trapped in one's body. During an episode of sleep paralysis, the person is fully aware of their surroundings but unable to move or speak. This can lead to feelings of panic, fear, and helplessness. Many people also report feeling a sense of pressure or weight on their chest, as if something is sitting on them. These sensations are often accompanied by vivid hallucinations that can be both frightening and bizarre. The exact cause of sleep paralysis is not fully understood. However, it is believed to be related to disruptions in the REM (Rapid Eye Movement) stage of sleep. During REM sleep, the body is typically paralyzed to prevent the individual from acting out their dreams. In sleep paralysis, this paralysis persists after the person has woken up, leading to the sensation of being unable to move. The hallucinations that accompany sleep paralysis are thought to be a result of the brain trying to make sense of the sensory information that it is receiving while the body is paralyzed. While sleep paralysis can be a frightening experience, it is generally not considered to be harmful. However, it can be a symptom of underlying sleep

disorders or other conditions, such as narcolepsy or anxiety. Therefore, it is important to seek medical attention if sleep paralysis is a recurrent problem. There are several ways to reduce the likelihood of experiencing sleep paralysis. One of the most effective is to maintain a consistent sleep schedule. Going to bed and waking up at the same time every day can help regulate the body's sleep-wake cycle and reduce the incidence of sleep paralysis. Additionally, reducing stress and practicing relaxation techniques such as meditation and deep breathing can also be helpful. There are also several strategies that can be used to manage an episode of sleep paralysis if it does occur. One of the most important is to remain calm and remind oneself that the experience is temporary and not harmful. Additionally, focusing on deep breathing or trying to wiggle one's fingers or toes can help break the paralysis. It can also be helpful to have a trusted friend or family member nearby to provide reassurance and support. Despite its prevalence and potential impact on mental health, sleep paralysis is not widely discussed or understood in mainstream society. Many people who experience it may feel ashamed or embarrassed to talk about it, or may not even realize that it is a recognized phenomenon. Therefore, increasing awareness and education about sleep paralysis is an important step in supporting individuals who are affected by it.

CONCLUSION

Sleep paralysis is a fascinating and complex phenomenon that has been reported across cultures and throughout history. Although it can be a frightening experience, it is generally not harmful and can be managed with proper attention to sleep hygiene and stress management. Increased awareness and education about sleep paralysis can help reduce stigma and provide support for those who are affected by it.

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