

Insomnia Research: Sleep Drug Safety Risks vs. Natural Sleep Remedies

A study has found that people who take one of the world's most commonly prescribed sleep medicines are at risk for nighttime falls, potential injury, and memory impairment.

May 20, 2014 (FPRC) -- A study from the University of Colorado at Boulder has found that people who take one of the world's most commonly prescribed sleep medicines are significantly more at risk for nighttime falls, potential injury, and memory impairment. The study, which involved twenty-five healthy adults, showed 58 percent of the older adults and 27 percent of the young adults who took a sleep-inducing drug called zolpidem showed zolpidem side effects including a significant loss of balance and impaired thinking-ability when awakened two hours after sleep.

Zolpidem is a generic drug that is marketed under a number of different brand names, including Ambien, Zolpimist, Edluar, Hypogen, Somidem and Ivedal. "These findings are important because falls are the leading cause of injury in older adults, and 30 percent of adults sixty-five and older who fall require hospitalization each year," said Associate Professor Kenneth Wright, lead study author.

Professor Wright continues: "The balance impairments of older adults taking zolpidem were clinically significant and the cognitive (mental ability) impairments were more than twice as large compared to the same older adults taking placebos. This suggests to us that sleep medication produces significant safety risks."

The good news is that there are natural alternatives available. The mineral magnesium has been studied as an effective sleep remedy. A recent Gallup Poll survey reported that magnesium consumption greatly declines as we age. 79 percent of adults fifty-five and over are eating below the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) of magnesium.

In fact, the National Institutes of Health web site says that older adults are at increased risk of magnesium deficiency due to their decreased ability to absorb the mineral. Also, the diseases to which older adults are vulnerable, and some of the drugs used in therapy, also contribute to magnesium loss.

Richard Rivlin, M.D., Chief of the Nutrition Division at New York Hospital/Cornell Medical Center says: "The prevalence of heart disease, diabetes and even leg cramps increases dramatically among older persons, and these are all health conditions in which magnesium deficiency has been found."

A recent National Sleep Foundation poll found that 67 percent of older Americans report having frequent insomnia and sleep problems. Particularly for older people, a possible underlying nutritional cause of insomnia may be a deficiency of certain minerals. James F. Balch, M.D., author of Prescription for Nutritional Healing, writes: "A lack of the nutrients calcium and magnesium will cause you to wake up after a few hours and not be able to return to sleep."

Chronic insomnia is one of the main symptoms of magnesium deficiency. Sleep in magnesium deficiency is usually agitated with frequent nighttime awakenings. On the other hand, a high

magnesium diet has been found to be associated with deeper, less interrupted sleep. This was shown in a study done by James Penland at the Human Nutrition Research Center in North Dakota. The study was called "Effects of trace element nutrition on sleep patterns in adult women."

Regarding the use of a natural sleep aid containing magnesium for insomnia relief, certain formulas are more effective than others. The combination of minerals included and the presence of cofactors in the product are key. Formulas should contain a two to one ratio of calcium to magnesium. The original research on this recommended ratio appeared in 1935 in the Journal of Physiological Reviews, and is made on the basis of long-term metabolic studies in men and women.

One insomnia remedy showing good results is Sleep Minerals II, made by Nutrition Breakthroughs in Glendale, California. Sleep Minerals II contains highly absorbable forms of calcium and magnesium, the best minerals for sleeplessness and insomnia, as well as heart health, restless legs syndrome, bone strength, and menopause insomnia. The formula also includes vitamin D and zinc and is delivered in a softgel form with healthy carrier oils, making it more quickly absorbable than tablets or capsules and providing a deeper, longer-lasting sleep.

Richard P. of Parkville, Maryland says: "The Sleep Minerals are making quite a difference. I was regularly waking up at around 3:00 a.m. and after a few days use my sleep improved quite a lot. I wake up once a night to go to the bathroom, but the great thing is, I then fall back asleep and sleep several more hours. This has been a great improvement."

Kimberly B. of Troy, Michigan says: "I have been taking Sleep Minerals II for about a month now. I have tried everything out there and this supplement is amazing. I have suffered with insomnia for 2 1/2 years. I have also had restless leg syndrome my entire life and this is the first relief I've ever had...gone for a month now."

As research continues to emerge on sleep medications, more and more adverse effects are likely to be discovered. Natural minerals can be an effective, safe alternative.

For more information on Sleep Minerals II, visit www.NutritionBreakthroughs.com

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