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Identifying REM-sleep behavior disorder by the RBD screening questionnaire in non-neurological patients

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REM-sleep Behavior Disorder (RBD) is a parasomnia which is characterized by dream-enacting behavior due to loss of normal skeletal muscle atonia during sleep. RBD can lead to a neurodegenerative disorder such as Parkinson disease, MSA or DLB in 81% after 16 years. Therefore, an early diagnosis of RBD is important. Video-Polysomnography (V-PSG) is required to confirm the diagnosis of RBD, which is obviously unsuitable for screening purposes. Studies using the SLEEP-EVAL system and the Mayo Sleep Questionnaire suggested a prevalence of RBD between 0.5 to 8.9%. Both questionnaires have poor or unknown specificity. Recently the 'REM Sleep Behavior Disorder Screening Questionnaire' (RBDSQ) has been validated with a sensitivity of 0.96 and a specificity of up to 0.92 underlining its potential usefulness as a screening instrument. The objective of this research project was to investigate the prevalence of RBD by the RBDSQ in non-neurological patients. Between October 2008 and October 2010 the RBDSQ was administered to 551 subjects in the out-patient setting of GP practices and the in-patient setting of non-neurological wards. This screening revealed a prevalence of 27%, clearly exceeding previously known data. Accordingly, after performing a V-PSG in five participants we confirmed only one case of RBD and another case with possible RBD. The present work suggests that results of the RBDSQ and probably also other questionnaires have to be interpreted with caution. Its usefulness as a screening instrument needs further investigation and refinement.

Biography

Markus Schymalla has completed Medical School in 2011 at Philipps-University Marburg, Germany. He is now working to finish his MD thesis at the Department of Neurology and is employed as a Resident at the Center of Radiooncology, Philipps-University Marburg.

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