

Autoimmune encephalitis and sleep disorders



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Objective: To identify the spectrum of sleep disorders associated with autoimmune limbic encephalitis associated with LGI1 antibodies.

Design: 20 patients with limbic encephalitis associated with LGI1 antibodies were evaluated in the neurology department, PUMCH between January 1, 2013, and February 1, 2015.

Results: In 10 patients (50%), serious sleep disturbances were identified: insomnia (n=4), hypersomnia (n=5), abnormal sleep movements (n=4), REM sleep behavior disorder (RBD)(n=2). 8 patients underwent polysomnography at presentation, two of 8 polysomnograms demonstrated loss of rapid eye movement sleep muscle atonia; non-REM sleep abnormal sleep movements were found in 4 patients. Ten patients received immunotherapy (corticosteroids, IVIG). Sleep disorders resolved completely or almost completely in 8 of 10 patients who received immunotherapy.

Conclusions: Sleep disorders are cardinal manifestations of autoimmune limbic encephalitis in association with a spectrum of neurologic presentations. They may respond favorably to immunotherapy.
