

# New clinical guideline to help clinicians treat circadian rhythm sleep-wake disorders

October 14 2015

---

A new clinical practice guideline published by the American Academy of Sleep Medicine provides clinicians with updated recommendations for the treatment of intrinsic circadian rhythm sleep-wake disorders (CRSWDs).

The guideline, which is published in the Oct. 15 issue of the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*, updates previously published practice parameters for the treatment of advanced sleep-wake phase disorder, delayed sleep-wake phase disorder, non-24-hour sleep-wake rhythm disorder, and irregular sleep-wake rhythm disorder. Developed by an expert task force and approved by the AASM board of directors, the guideline was based on a systematic literature review, assessment of the evidence using the GRADE methodology, and meta-analyses.

"This new [clinical practice guideline](#) promotes high quality, patient-centered care for people who have an intrinsic circadian rhythm sleep-wake disorder," said AASM President Dr. Nathaniel Watson. "I expect this guideline will catalyze future research that will further our understanding of the treatment of these [disorders](#)."

Among the recommendations included in the guideline are:

- Positive endorsement of strategically timed melatonin for select CRSWD patients
- Positive endorsement of light therapy with or without accompanying behavioral interventions for select CRSWD

patients

- Avoidance of melatonin and discrete sleep-promoting medications for select elderly CRSWD patients

Due to either insufficient or absent data, no recommendations were provided for other treatments such as prescribed sleep-wake scheduling or wakefulness-promoting medications.

It is important for clinicians to note that the new clinical guideline did not update the existing practice parameters for the two circadian rhythm sleep-wake disorders that are extrinsic: shift work disorder and jet lag disorder.

According to the AASM, circadian rhythm sleep-wake disorders are caused by alterations of the circadian time-keeping system, its entrainment mechanisms, or a misalignment of the endogenous circadian rhythm and the external environment. While intrinsic disorders are thought to exist predominantly due to innate phenomena, extrinsic disorders predominantly arise from environmental influences.

The AASM reports that the most common presenting symptoms of circadian rhythm sleep-wake disorders are difficulty initiating and maintaining sleep, and excessive sleepiness. Left untreated, these disorders can cause adverse health outcomes; impairments in social, occupational and educational performance; and safety concerns.

**More information:** "Clinical Practice Guideline for the Treatment of Intrinsic Circadian Rhythm Sleep-Wake Disorders: Advanced Sleep-Wake Phase Disorder (ASWPD), Delayed Sleep-Wake Phase Disorder (DSWPD), Non-24-Hour Sleep-Wake Rhythm Disorder (N24SWD), and Irregular Sleep-Wake Rhythm Disorder (ISWRD). An Update for 2015," *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*, 2015.

"Do Evidence-Based Treatments for Circadian Rhythm Sleep-Wake Disorders Make the GRADE? Updated Guidelines Point to Need for More Clinical Research," *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*, 2015.

Provided by American Academy of Sleep Medicine

Citation: New clinical guideline to help clinicians treat circadian rhythm sleep-wake disorders (2015, October 14) retrieved 4 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-10-clinical-guideline-clinicians-circadian-rhythm.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.