



Nightmare Disorder



Overview

This is a sleep disorder. It gives you extremely frightening dreams that disrupt your sleep. It can make you afraid to go to bed, which leads to being tired all day.

Causes

We don't understand the cause of these nightmares. They can be triggered by many things, including stress, anxiety, trauma and medications. They may be linked to a change in your sleep schedule, to insomnia, or to certain mental health disorders. They can be caused by substance abuse. And, they can be triggered by frightening stories and movies.

Symptoms

If you have this disorder, your nightmares routinely wake you up in distress. In these dreams, you may deal with terrifying and disturbing situations. Your nightmares trigger feelings of anxiety, fear, disgust or sadness. They affect your daily life. It may be hard for you to stop thinking about the images from your dreams. You may be scared to fall asleep, and you may be so tired during the day that you have trouble functioning.

Treatment

This disorder can be treated with talk therapy, and with therapy that teaches you to create happier endings for your nightmares. If you have an underlying medical condition, getting treatment for that may help. In rare cases, medications may be beneficial. Your healthcare provider can create a plan that's right for you.

Actor portrayals in photos

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