

Sleep Problems and Correlates of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder

Treated at Siriraj Hospital

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Abstract

Background: Sleep problems are found as the common comorbidity in children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Evidence-based studies concerning sleep problems in this population is still limited.

Objectives: To determine the characteristics and factors associated with sleep problems in children with ASD.

Material and Method: A cross-sectional study of 200 parents of children with ASD aged 4-18 years was performed during March-December 2018. The sleep problems were measured using the Thai version of the Children Sleep Habit Questionnaire (CSHQ). Aberrant Behavior Checklist-Community (ABC-C) was used to evaluate behavioral problems. Several demographic variables and their association with sleep problems were also examined and analyzed by Chi-square and multiple linear regression.

Results: 88.5% of children with ASD had sleep problems. The mean total score of CSHQ was $48.70 \pm SD 6.81$. The most frequent type of sleep problems was daytime sleepiness. The mean of ABC-C score was $53.10 \pm SD 34.49$ with the highest score in hyperactivity-subtype. Total ABC-C score was significantly related with total CSHQ-score ($p=0.186$). Factors significantly associated with sleep problems were age, irritability, noise in bedroom, too hot or cold bedroom, and large meal before bedtime ($p<0.05$).

Conclusion: Sleep problems in children with ASD are common and related to behavioral and environmental factors. Early assessment and identification of risk factors can imply effective care.

Keywords: ABC-C, autism spectrum disorder, CSHQ, sleep problem