

Correlation between Insomnia and Risky Behaviors in Taiwanese Adolescents

Cheng-Fang Yen

Department of Psychiatry, Faculty of Medicine, College of Medicine, Kaohsiung Medical University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan

Department of Psychiatry, Kaohsiung Medical University Hospital, Kaohsiung Medical University, Kaohsiung, Taiwan

Background: The aims of this cross-sectional study were to examine the correlation between the two insomnia factors of the AIS-8 we previously identified and a variety of adolescent risky behaviors, including suicidal behavior, violence, regular alcohol drinking, illicit drug use, and truancy using a large-scale, representative population of Taiwanese adolescents.

Methods: This investigation was based on data from the Project for the Health of Adolescents in Southern Taiwan, which were collected from three metropolitan cities and four counties. 207 classes that included a total of 12,210 adolescent students were randomly selected. A total of 11,111 (91.0%) adolescents gave written informed consent for participation. Measures included the Athens Insomnia Scale (AIS-8) for insomnia problems, suicidality module on the Epidemiological version of the Kiddie Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia for suicidality, the Adolescent Aggressive Behaviors Questionnaire for violence, the Questionnaires for Experience in Substance Use (Q-ESU) for alcohol consumption and illicit drug use, truancy, and the Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Scale (CES-D) for depressive symptoms.

Results: Adolescents who had more severe insomnia symptoms were more likely to report

suicidality, violence, and truancy, but not regular alcohol drinking or illicit drug use.

Adolescents who had poorer subjective sleep and more daytime distress were more likely to report all five risky behaviors.

Summary: Our findings suggest the importance of subjective sleep and daytime distress when screening for the likelihood of risky behavior in adolescents. Clinicians and researchers should consider the possible need for intervention to avoid risky behavior when adolescents report problems with subjective sleep and daytime distress.

Cheng-Fang Yen, MD, PhD

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高雄醫學大學醫學系暨附設醫院精神科

chfaye@cc.kmu.edu.tw

0975356725