An international survey of sleeping problems in the general population.

LÄ©ger D, Poursain B, Neubauer D, Uchiyama M.
Centre du Sommeil et de la Vigilance, HÃ´tel-Dieu de Paris, UniversitÃ© Paris Descartes, Paris, France. damien.leger@htd.aphp.fr

Abstract
OBJECTIVE: This international omnibus survey investigated the prevalence and characteristics of sleep problems, as well as strategies for resolving sleep problems, in the general population of the USA, France, Germany, Italy, Spain, the UK and Japan. Research design and methods: A representative sample of the general population aged > or = 15 years was recruited from each country. Questions focused on the nature of sleeping problems, the impact of problems on daily functioning and behavior with regard to resolving sleeping problems.

RESULTS: A total of 10 132 individuals were included in this survey. The prevalence of sleeping problems was 56% in the USA, 31% in Western Europe and 23% in Japan. Most individuals with sleeping problems considered these to have an impact on their daily functioning, with family life most affected in the Western European sample, personal activities in the US sample and professional activities in the Japanese sample. Almost half of individuals with sleep problems had never taken any steps to resolving them, and the majority of respondents had not spoken with a physician about their problems. Of those individuals who had consulted a physician, drug prescriptions had been given to approximately 50% in Western Europe and the USA and 90% in Japan.

CONCLUSIONS: Sleeping problems continue to present a considerable burden across Western Europe, the USA and Japan. Despite this, they are under-reported and under-treated, with almost half of affected individuals not taking any steps to resolve their sleeping problems.

PMID:18070379[PubMed - indexed for MEDLINE]