

New Research Unveils Surprising Insights into Sleep and BDD Treatment Outcomes

A recent study challenges the link between sleep disruption and Body Dysmorphic Disorder treatment outcomes, calling for further research

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES, November 30, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- • The study, conducted over 12-weeks, revealed that two-thirds of participants reported significant insomnia symptoms at baseline, highlighting a disproportionately high prevalence of sleep disruption among individuals seeking treatment for Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD).

- Results did not reveal a significant correlation between the severity of sleep disruption and BDD symptom reduction across the treatment course, suggesting sleep disturbances and BDD symptoms may function independently in this context.
- The high prevalence of sleep concerns among individuals seeking treatment for BDD prompts the need for further research to replicate these findings and gain a better understanding of the relationship between sleep disruptions and BDD.

Koa Health, a leader in hybrid mental health care, announces groundbreaking findings from a comprehensive study published in the [Journal of Affective Disorders](#), investigating the crucial link between sleep disruption and treatment outcomes for Body Dysmorphic Disorder (BDD). The study, co-authored by Koa Health's CEO and Founder, Dr. Oliver Harrison, and Dr. Sabine Wilhelm, Chief of Psychology, Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), and professor at Harvard Medical School, sheds light on the critical role of sleep in the context of BDD treatment response.

Conducted as part of a 12-week guided smartphone app-based Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) intervention for BDD, the research uncovered surprising insights. Among the 77 participants enrolled, a staggering two-thirds reported significant insomnia symptoms at baseline, underscoring the notably high prevalence of sleep disruption within this population seeking treatment for BDD.

Contrary to initial expectations, the study results revealed something unexpected: there appeared to be no direct correlation between the severity of sleep disruption and the reduction of BDD symptoms throughout the course of treatment. This suggests that while sleep concerns were prevalent, they seemed to function independently of the changes observed in BDD

symptomatology during treatment.

“Most mental health services are so busy that research on even the most common conditions is often more limited than in other medical areas,” said Dr. Oliver Harrison, CEO and founder of Koa Health, “This is certainly the case for body dysmorphic disorder (BDD), a common and severe condition with a high suicide rate affecting around 2% of adults. In this paper, we look at the link between sleep disturbance and BDD symptoms and response to treatment. We found sleep disturbances to be very common in the group, and that sleep and BDD symptoms are less related than we had thought. This is another important clue in optimizing BDD treatment and opening up mental health care to all.”

Dr. Sabine Wilhelm, Chief of Psychology, Massachusetts General Hospital (MGH), and professor at Harvard Medical School added further insights, “We did not find associations between sleep disruption and BDD symptom severity or BDD symptom change. However, considering the high rates of insomnia in BDD, addressing sleep deficiency directly could still be helpful especially because sleep disruption could leave patients vulnerable to other psychiatric or general health concerns.”

Despite the lack of a direct association between sleep and Body Dysmorphic Disorder treatment outcomes in this study, the high prevalence of sleep disturbances among individuals seeking BDD treatment underscores the importance of continued research. Further investigations are imperative to replicate these findings and delve deeper into the intricate interplay between sleep disruption and the dynamics of BDD treatment response. The study represents a significant step forward in understanding the multifaceted factors influencing BDD, emphasizing the need for continued exploration to optimize treatment approaches and improve outcomes—both for individuals grappling with this complex disorder and their loved ones.

About Koa Health

Koa Health provides an integrated approach to care that delivers mental health for everyone, whether they prefer digital-first care or would benefit from clinical services delivered by a human. Available to more than 3 million users worldwide, Koa Health addresses the full continuum of mental health needs— from prevention to treatment.

Backed by leading investors such as Morningside, Ancora Finance Group, Wellington Partners Life Sciences, and MTIP, Koa Health leverages deep clinical expertise, research, and technology to deliver effective and accessible care that adapts to users’ unique circumstances, leading to lasting behavior change and positive health outcomes across the full continuum of mental health.

With operations in Barcelona, the US and the UK, Koa Health partners with leading clinicians and academics, including Massachusetts General Hospital, the University College of London, the London School of Economics, and Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health NHS Foundation Trust.

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