

A better night, is a better day!

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Background

Individuals with advanced HD often experience involuntary motor disturbances throughout the night. Examples of such disturbances are repeatedly bumping against the edges of the bed and the movement of their legs over the side of the bed. They claim to feel a sensation of 'restless legs' and due to these bodily movements, in combination with losing their duvet, they awake feeling cold. Residents report that they sleep poorly. Patients at this stage of the disease are dependent on daily, intensive and long-term care.

Weighted blankets have been tested in order to ensure that the quality of sleep for the residents improves. It has been stated in the literature that weighted blankets have a positive impact on the quality of sleep for people suffering from dementia and autism as they also reported trouble sleeping due to multiple bodily movements. We decided to investigate whether weighted blankets could contribute to an improved quality of sleep for residents with HD.

Sleeping bag



The sleeping bag is easy to use. This sleeping bag seems to give the patient a firm hold, which makes him or her sleep better. Also, the sleeping bag does not fall off the patient so that he or she retains the warmth. The sleeping bag is usually used for patients with chorea of the legs.

Compression blanket



The compression blanket creates a slight pressure on the patient's body. Through this pressure, the blanket helps to control the patients motor restlessness, allowing them to sleep better and not wake up from their movements.

Balling blanket



The balling blanket provides continuous and undivided pressure and stimulation to the patient's body while lying in bed. This means that the patient is no longer distracted by other stimuli.

Weighted blanket



The weighted blanket exerts deep pressure on the patient's body. This creates a sense of security that makes them sleep better and fall asleep more quickly.

Methods

Different blankets have been tested on seven residents with Advanced HD with movements during the night:

- weighted blanket
- compression blanket
- balling blanket
- sleeping bag

Results

Residents fell asleep faster, experienced fewer movements, especially leg movement as the legs no longer fell over the edge of the bed and were able to stay under the blankets and remain warm.

Conclusions

Weighted blankets have a positive effect on the quality of sleep for patients with advanced HD as evidence by observations of healthcare professionals have shown.

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