

## An Unknown Health Problem: Restless Leg Syndrome

Sophie Caleb

### Abstract

Restless Legs Syndrome (RLS) is a disorder related to some neurological dysfunction. In which an individual suffers severe impulses to shake their legs from left to right. They always experience a very discomfort sensation in their legs when they remain still. People who are suffering from Restless Leg Syndrome have trouble sleeping because of this discomfort sensation and may experience these impulses several times during the night time. This reduces the quality of their sleep and making them feel drowsy during the day time. Restless Leg Syndrome also makes it difficult for those people who travel long distances by car or travel by air. RLS sometime becomes very stressful but with some medicinal treatment and lifestyle changes, it is almost always treatable and curable.

**Keywords:** Restless leg syndrome; Impulses; Neurological dysfunction.

### How to cite this article:

Sophie Caleb, An Unknown Health Problem: Restless Leg Syndrome. Indian J Surg Nurs. 2020;9(2):79–80.

### Introduction

Restless legs syndrome (RLS) is a neurological disorder that causes an overpowering impulses to move your legs. It is also known as Willis-Ekbom disease. Many Doctors do consider it as a sleep disorder because it usually happens or the condition gets worse while the person is at rest. The person might complaint about trouble sleeping or even sitting for a long time, such as in a cinema hall or in a car. It may get worse if the person will not get treatment. Anybody can get it, but it's more common in women, and middle-aged people both male and female and they are more likely to have severe symptoms if not corrected in the proper manner.

#### *Restless Legs Syndrome Symptoms*

People with restless legs syndrome have unusual feelings in their legs, like itching, crawling, throbbing pins and needles, which creates a very

powerful impulse to move their legs to make that disturbing sensations go away. The condition can also happen in other areas of the body like the arms, chest, or head. This kind of feelings usually happen on both sides of the body. In some cases, it can happen on only one side, or sometime it may might start from one side and then move to the other.

#### *A Case Study in Restless Leg Syndrome (RLS)*

42 year old adult male person who was referred to the sleep disorders centre for insomnia, non-restorative sleep, and a feeling of uneasiness throughout the day.

*Patient History and Examination:* His sleep problems began during late adolescence and started with difficulty falling asleep. He also developed frequent awakenings throughout the night. Although he complained of irritating discomfort in his legs during the evening, the sleep disturbance had initially been ascribed to stress (related to job) and to his work place.

*Review of sleep pattern:* Prior to treatment, he used to go to bed around 11:00 PM and usually fell asleep within 30-45 minutes. But he used to get up when he gets disturbed with his legs. In such cases, he had to get up repeatedly to walk off his legs at such times, sleep onset might be delayed for 1-2 hours. Once asleep, he uses to woke up for 3-5 times per night with achy legs.

*Evaluation and Diagnosis:* A complete physical examination was done and documented the

**Author Affiliation:** Associate Professor, MKSSS, College of Nursing for Women, Mouje Sukli (Gupchup), Tal. Hingana, Nargundkar Shaikshanik Prkalp, Nargundkar layout, near Tajashreehonda showroom, Deonagar, Nagpur

**Corresponding Author:** Sophie Caleb, Associate Professor, MKSSS, College of Nursing for Women, Mouje Sukli (Gupchup), Tal. Hingana, Nargundkar Shaikshanik Prkalp, Nargundkar layout, near Tajashreehonda showroom, Deonagar, Nagpur, India.

**E-mail:** [sophiecaleb@gmail.com](mailto:sophiecaleb@gmail.com)

existence of periodic limb movements during sleep, and ruled out as a sleep disorder. On the basis of his history, he was diagnosed with Restless Legs Syndrome.

*Treatment:* Sleep health measures were started, along with relaxation training, with a leg exercise regime to be done almost daily. The bedroom clock was removed. These measures did little to decrease his RLS symptoms. If RLS is mild or moderate, some small changes in everyday life might help, and also to avoid caffeine is advised.

Other ways to treat RLS without drugs include:

- Leg massages, if possible, every day.
- Hot bath especially before sleep will work.
- Heating pads or ice packs on legs when it became more restless.
- To use a vibrating pad called Relaxis, if possible.

### Conclusion

Restless legs syndrome, it is an intrinsic sleep

disorder, and it is only a clinical entity. In which the diagnosis is done exclusively on clinical basis. It is important to recognize this syndrome as effective management can cause considerable relief of symptom and improve the quality of life.

### References

1. Walters AS. Toward a positive definition of the restless leg's syndrome. *MovDisord.* 1995;10:634-42.
2. Aul EA, Davis BJ, Rodnitzky RL. The importance of serum iron studies in the assessment of restless legs syndrome. *Neurology.* 1998;51:912.
3. Goodman JD, Brodie C, Ayida GA. Restless leg syndrome in pregnancy. *BMJ.* 1988;297:1101-2.
4. Wetter TC, Stiasny K, Kohnen R, Oertel WH, Trenkwalder C. Polysomnographic sleep measures in patients with restless legs syndrome. *MovDisord.* 1998;13:820-4.
5. Winkelman JW, Chertow GM, Lazarus JM. Restless legs syndrome in last stage renal disease. *Am J Kidney Dis.* 1996;28:372-8.

