



UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG

Institute of Neuroscience and Physiology
Occupational therapy

BACHELOR THESIS IN OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY, 15 higher credits, Spring 2013, First cycle
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Title

Use of weighted blanket as an individualized aid to promote sleep – an intervention study

Author

Ann Lindquist Kari
Reg OT

Supervisor

Anna Johansson
RN, PhD
Yvonne Widell
M Sc, Reg OT

Examinator

Kristina Holmgren
PhD, Reg OT

Abstract

Background: A lot of individuals seek help from health care because they experience inadequate sleep duration or poor sleep quality. They also experience that sleep problems have negative consequences that lead to difficulties in coping with daily life tasks in home, employment or social life. Registered occupational therapists encounter in their daily clinical work these individuals with insomnia who experience activity imbalance and a lack of recovery. Weighted blanket can be prescribed as an intervention of this kind of illness.

Purpose: To evaluate effects of weight blanket as an individualized aid for experienced insomnia in those individuals who sought primary care occupational therapy department.

Method: A pilot study with a pretest- posttest control design was used. Fourteen individuals participated in the study and estimated sleep latency, sleep pattern and alertness during the day. Data collection by a day and night diary. The survey was based on prescribing of weighted blankets which took place in year 2011 and 2012.

Results: The results showed statistical significant changes regarding sleep latency, sleep pattern and alertness during the day after using weighted blanket for four weeks compared to before the intervention. The main change that occurred after the use of weighted blanket was listed in the category of sleep patterns in variable restless sleep – sleep peacefully. No significant statistically change occurred in the category of alertness during the day in variable involuntary movements. The follow-up measurements were conducted after the intervention showed that the improvements in sleep duration, sleep patterns and alertness during the day were sustained over time.

Conclusion: The results of this study showed that weighted blanket may be an appropriate treatment option for experienced insomnia.

Keywords: weighted blanket, insomnia, occupational therapy

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Institute of Neuroscience and Physiology, Occupational therapy/Physiotherapy

Visit adress: Arvid Wallgrens Backe hus 2 Post adress: Box 455, SE 405 30 Göteborg, Sweden

Tel +46(0)31 786 0000 Fax +46(0)31 786 572