

## Dream recall and content in Rapid Eye Movement (REM) Sleep Behavior Disorder patients

Monday, September 23, 2024 4:20 PM (10 minutes)

**INTRODUCTION:** Previous work suggested that idiopathic REM Sleep Behavior Disorder (iRBD) may be associated with alterations in dream content, including more aggression as compared to healthy control (HC) individuals, and in dream recall frequency (DRF; *i.e.*, the number of dreams recalled in a given timespan). However, several studies failed to replicate these findings, questioning their reliability. Aim of our study was to explore potential differences in DRF and dream content between iRBD and HC participants.

**METHODS:** Participants (iRBD=15, HC=15) filled out retrospective questionnaires assessing their Attitude Towards Dreams (ATD), DRF, nightmare frequency, and aggressiveness, affective valence, and arousal of dreams in the previous three months. Subsequently, participants wore an actigraph and recorded a report of their last dream experience each morning upon awakening for two weeks. Afterward, reports were classified as either contentful dreams, dreams without recall of content, or no dreams.

**RESULTS:** Retrospective measures highlighted higher aggressive contents in iRBDs compared to HCs ( $p < 0.01$ ), while no differences were found in nightmare frequency, affective valence, or arousal. Retrospective and report-based DRF measures identified no between-group difference. However, our iRBD sample showed lower ATD scores in comparison to HCs ( $p < 0.01$ ). Such a difference may represent a relevant confound, as previous work demonstrated a strong correlation between ATD and DRF.

**CONCLUSIONS:** Our study provides further evidence supporting dream content alterations in iRBD. Future dream content textual analyses will allow us to detect and quantify specific indices characterizing iRBD dreams, investigating their possible correlation with individual symptoms.

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